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JOHN P. MEIER

Law and History in Matthew's Gospel

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Law and History in Matthew's Gospel

A Redactional Study of Mt. 5:17-48

ROMAE
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TYPIS PONTIFICIAE UNIVERSITATIS GREGORIANAE — ROMAE

Dedication

The Rev. Msgr. Myles M. Bourke, S.T.D, S.S.L.

Grammateus mathēteutheis tēi basileiai tōn ouranōn

Mt 13:52

Foreword

The work on the following thesis began in the spring and summer of 1971, when the author was finishing the requirements for the S.S.L. degree at the Biblical Institute in Rome. The research continued during a *doctorandus* year in Rome and two years of teaching as professor of New Testament at St. Joseph Seminary, Dunwoodie, Yonkers, New York. The thesis was completed in Rome during the winter of 1974-75. Consequently, with few exceptions, the literature reviewed in this thesis can extend only to the end of 1974.

During these years I have been indebted to many persons for various forms of assistance. It goes without saying that my father, mother, and family have provided the indispensable personal support. His Eminence, Terence Cardinal Cooke, Archbishop of New York, generously provided the opportunity for my years of study in Rome. I am also indebted to the Rev. Msgr. Joseph T. O'Keefe, Secretary of Education for the Archdiocese, for his encouragement. For hospitality and comradeship, I am grateful to the faculties and students of both the North American College in Rome and St. Joseph's Seminary in New York. The Rev. Harry S. Benjamin, the Rev. Stephen Dunn, the Rev. John P. Heil, the Rev. Frederick Schuele, and the Rev. William J. Fay were especially generous in helping me prepare the manuscript. Miss Carin Fogh was most patient and considerate in the typing of the final copy. A special word of thanks is due my colleagues at Dunwoodie, the Rev. Richard J. Dillon, the Rev. Robert P. Imbelli, and the Rev. Joseph A. Komonchak. Likewise, I wish to thank the members of the CBA Task-Force on Matthew for their valuable criticism of various hypotheses presented in this thesis. Last but not least, I owe particular recognition to my director, the Rev. Maximilian Zerwick, S.J., and to my second reader, the Rev. Francis McCool, S. J., for their patience and helpful suggestions.

The man to whom this thesis is dedicated alone knows how much I owe him.

Rome
June 19, 1975

JOHN P. MEIER

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CHAPTER I

Presuppositions

Introduction

The purpose of this thesis is to investigate the meaning of the programmatic statement on the Law in Mt 5:17-20 in the light of the antitheses that follow (5:21-48) and in the larger context of Mt's[1] theology of salvation-history, eschatology, and Christology. In order to carry out this investigation, many presuppositions about the time, place, authorship, and sources of Mt must be made. To establish all these presuppositions in detail would demand four or five separate theses. Fortunately, since most of our presuppositions reflect the consensus of Matthean research today, their acceptance here is reasonable, not arbitrary. But it is important that these presuppositions be spelled out beforehand for the reader. Too often writers of theses work with presuppositions that are never formally acknowledged. Such neglect can lead to unnecessary confusion in and disagreement with the body of the thesis. Hence, before we begin the thesis proper, we wish to call the reader's attention to the presuppositions that govern this study of Mt.[2]

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[1] Following the usage of many scholars, and most recently of A. Sand, *Das Gesetz und die Propheten* (Regensburg: Pustet, 1974) 1 n. 2, "Matthew" is used for both the written gospel that traditionally stands first in the NT canon and the final redactor of that gospel. The standard abbreviation for "Matthew" will be Mt. The same convention will be observed for Mark (Mk), Luke (Lk), and John (Jn). All these designations are for the sake of convenience; they should not be taken as critical judgments concerning the historical persons who actually wrote the gospels. These abbreviations and (wherever possible) all other abbreviations used in this thesis follow the usage of the *Catholic Biblical Quarterly*. Titles of articles and books are given in full the first time they are cited; thereafter, an abbreviated title is used.

[2] What follows serves in part as a *Forschungsbericht*. But the goal of presenting the presuppositions of this thesis means that the report is ordered according to topics rather than according to main works listed chronologically. For a *Forschungsbericht* on Mt that is more chronologically ordered, see the report in Sand, *Gesetz*, 1-31. Since we would agree with a great deal of what Sand says, there is no point in simply repeating his work here. But one might note that his tripartite division of the recent literature does not always work out well in practice.

A. Literary Sources

Our first presupposition is the acceptance of the two-source (or two-document) hypothesis. Mt knew and used Mk and some form of the sayings-source usually designated as Q. Granted the phenomenon of successive recensions of biblical works in the ancient world,[3] it is entirely possible that the Mk and Q known to Mt might have differed slightly from the forms known to Lk or (in the case of Mk) to us.[4] But the various forms were substantially identical.

Besides Mk and Q, Mt had a large amount of traditions proper to himself, traditions which are globally labeled M. M should not be thought of as one unified document alongside of Mk and Q.[5] Rather, it is an umbrella-term that covers many different strata of tradition (varying in origin and theological viewpoint) that came to Mt largely through his local church. One especially noteworthy element within M is the group of so-called Reflexionszitate (hereafter, RZ). The exact origin of these

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[3] The discovery of the biblical texts at Qumran has made this clear in reference to the OT; see, e. g., F. Cross, *The Ancient Library of Qumran*[2] (Garden City, N. Y.: Anchor Books, 1961).

[4] See, for example, J. Brown, "The Form of 'Q' Known to Matthew," *NTS* 8 (1961-62) 27-42; N. Walter, "Die Bearbeitung der Seligpreisungen durch Matthäus," *Studia Evangelica IV* (ed. F. Cross; Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1968) 246 n. 1; E. Schweizer, *Das Evangelium nach Matthäus* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1973) 3; and D. Lührmann, *Die Redaktion der Logienquelle* (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1969) 18, 21 n. 2, and the whole discussion in 11-23 (though we think Lührmann's attempt to discern exactly what happened to Q between its formation and Mt's use of it fails for lack of data). Brown suggests that Mt's special traditions (M) came to him already united with Q, so that the large sayings-document Mt worked with should be designated Q^{mt}. The formation of the gospel would thus follow the development $Q + M = Q^{mt} + Mk = Mt$. On the other hand, Brown thinks the "original Q" has been preserved in Lk alone. — But must this combination of Q and M be thought of in terms of a combination of documents? Why could not Q be expanded by an oral form of M in liturgy and catechesis? The same could also hold true of Mk and thus explain the mixing of M with Markan traditions too (on this, cf. D. Hare, *The Theme of Jewish Persecution of Christians in the Gospel According to St. Matthew* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1967] 81). It has long been observed that, while Lk tends to alternate his sources in large blocks, Mt tends to mesh them. This "meshing" tendency is quite understandable against the background of fixed documents (Mk and Q) constantly commented upon by oral tradition (M). This might also explain the tendency to juxtapose closely or interweave contradictory material; cf. also, G. Herbert, "The Problem of the Gospel According to Matthew," *SJT* 14 (1961) 403-413. — If some authors claim too much in trying to describe the milieu and evolution of Mt's sources, H. Frankemölle, *Jahwebund und Kirche Christi* (Münster: Aschendorff, 1974) tends to ignore the problem of developing sources and shifting *Sitz im Leben* in favor of a brilliant author who writes a theology of history from OT models — in apparent isolation.

[5] Contrary to G. Kilpatrick, *The Origins of the Gospel According to St. Matthew* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1946) 36, who posits a written M source, more rudimentary and shorter than Q; on pp. 37ff, Kilpatrick seems to restrict M unduly to logia proper to Mt, without regard to special narrative material or to any of the Reflexionszitate. For the view we favor, cf. Schweizer, "Zur Sondertradition der Gleichnisse bei Matthäus," in *Matthäus und seine Gemeinde* (Stuttgart: KBW, 1974) 98-105.

citations (written documents or testimony books? oral scribal traditions? *ad hoc* creations of Mt?) is still disputed.[6] Most likely the bulk of the RZ existed in the tradition before Mt; Mt probably adapted them to his precise context and perhaps created a few in analogy with the ones he received. At any rate, the introductory formula with *plēroō* is redactional.

With the RZ we see in miniature the basic problem of M. Since M is by definition the Matthean material not witnessed by Mk and Q, how are we to distinguish M (tradition) from Matthean redaction? The customary procedure is to look for typically Matthean words, phrases, and grammatical usages in the material under study. If they abound, the material is assigned to Mt's creativity or heavy redactional activity. If such typical words and phrases are largely absent, the material is attributed to tradition which Mt received. Use of this criterion is extremely important in treating 5:17-20, where only 5:18 has a clear Q-parallel.

It would be a mistake to suppose that it was the final redactor (for the sake of convenience, we shall call him Matthew) who first combined parts of M with Mk or Q. If G. Kilpatrick is even partly correct about the liturgical *Sitz im Leben* of Mt's gospel, then M largely represents the living oral tradition that surrounded, interpreted, modified, and expanded

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[6] The Reflexionszitate have received increasingly detailed attention in the past few decades. Important works that treat the question at length include K. Stendahl, *The School of St. Matthew*[2] (Lund: Gleerup, 1968), which compares the Reflexionszitate to the scribal interpretation of the OT in the Habakkuk commentary of Qumran; P. Nepper-Christensen, *Das Matthäusevangelium. Ein Judenchristliches Evangelium?* (Aarhus: Universitetsforlaget, 1958), which notes the different enumerations of the Reflexionszitate because of varying criteria of identification (cf. p. 139); B. Metzger, "The Formulas Introducing Quotations in the New Testament and the Mishnah," *JBL* 70 (1951) 297-307 (the Mishnah has no real parallel to the Reflexionszitate); B. Gärtner, "The Habakkuk Commentary (DSH) and the Gospel of Matthew," *ST* 8 (1954) 1-24 (denial of the close parallel which Stendahl sees between the "midrash pesher" of DSH and the Reflexionszitate); A. Baumstark, "Die Zitate des Mt.-Evangeliums aus dem Zwoelfprophetenbuch," *Bib* 37 (1956) 296-313 (citations from minor prophets in Mt stem from old targum on prophets); J. Fitzmyer, "The Use of Explicit Old Testament Quotations in Qumran Literature and in the New Testament," *NTS* 7 (1960-61) 297-333 (the Reflexionszitate have practically no equivalent at Qumran); D. M. Smith, "The Use of the Old Testament in the New," in *The Use of the Old Testament in the New and Other Essays* (ed. J. Efird; Durham: Duke, 1972) 3-65. Three recent works given over greatly or entirely to the Reflexionszitate and related questions are R. Gundry, *The Use of the Old Testament in St. Matthew's Gospel* (Leiden: Brill, 1967); R. McConnell, *Law and Prophecy in Matthew's Gospel. The Authority and Use of the Old Testament in the Gospel of St. Matthew* (Basel: Fr. Reinhardt Kommissionsverlag, 1969); W. Rothfuchs, *Die Erfüllungszitate des Matthäus-Evangeliums* (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1969). For summaries of these works, see F. van Segbroeck, "Les citations d'accomplissement dans l'évangile selon saint Matthieu d'après trois ouvrages récents," in *L'évangile selon Matthieu: Rédaction et théologie* (ed. M. Didier; Gembloux: Duculot, 1972) 107-130; cf. also Sand, *Gesetz*, 152. — It should be noted that the name Reflexionszitate, while the most common, is not the only designation used; Rothfuchs prefers Erfüllungszitate, while English-speaking writers use various phrases like formula quotations, formulas of fulfillment, etc. For more on the Reflexionszitate, see the treatment of 5:18 and 5:17 in Chapter III.

the written documents Mk and Q as they were read and expounded in the liturgical assembly. Again, this makes the distinction between M and Matthean redaction difficult. At first glance, we might attribute Mt's slightly expanded reading of the eucharistic words to his redaction (Mt 26:26-28; cf. Mk 14:22-24). But it is unlikely that the final redactor would have dared to alter the eucharistic words as known and pronounced in the very church for which the gospel was intended. The expansion of Mt 26:26-28 thus represents not the final redaction but M (the tradition of Mt's church), which had probably already altered Mk 14:22-24 before Mt ever laid a hand to it.[7] Such a situation warns us against too rigid and mechanical an approach to the two-source theory. It is not simply a matter of manuscripts being arbitrarily joined together with scissors and paste. For years the two documents "floated" in a sea of oral tradition, liturgical repetition, catechetical adaptation. By the time Mt came to redact Mk and Q, they were already heavily steeped in M.

It should be stressed that we accept the two-source theory as a working hypothesis, not as a "dogma," as its adversaries often label it. Other solutions of the synoptic problem, proposed in the past, still enjoy a certain following today. These include the theories of L. Vaganay (a complicated hypothesis involving the preaching of Peter, Aramaic Matthew translated into Greek, and a supplementary source called S),[8] X. Léon-

[7] Such considerations might lead to talk about M or Mt as the "targumizing" of Mk and Q. But to talk about Mt as a targum is an unhappy comparison. (1) The basic phenomenon involved in the rise of Aramaic targums is the translation (and commentary) of Sacred Scripture from one language, which has become largely unintelligible, to another language, which is intelligible. This would not be verified in the case of Mt, since the prior documents (Mk and Q) were already in Greek. (2) The word "targum" is not simply equivalent to "a large, free expansion"; the later, expurgated Targum Onkelos is often a very close, literal rendering of the Hebrew Pentateuch. (3) Even the freer Targums, like Neofiti, insert midrashim into the text at given points, but do not dare to undertake wholesale reordering of large blocks of received material. Mt, on the other hand, undertakes a great reordering of the first part of Mk to create the diptych of Messiah of the Word/Messiah of the Deed in chs. 5-7 and 8-9. (We should note, however, that C. Burger has questioned this division of Messiah of the Word/Messiah of the Deed in his article, "Jesu Taten nach Matthäus 8 und 9," *ZTK* 70 (1973) 272-287. Burger prefers to see an ecclesiological emphasis in chs. 8-9; but, at any rate, he does not deny Mt's massive reordering of the Markan material. Schweizer seems to acknowledge both the Christological and the ecclesiological elements in chs. 8-9 in his "Christus und Gemeinde im Matthäusevangelium," in *Matthäus und seine Gemeinde*, 9-68, especially 21.) In short, the analogy of the targums is thus rather weak. — Similar objections must be raised against the midrash theory of M. Goulder, *Midrash and Lection in Matthew* (London: SPCK, 1974), especially 1-46. His definition of midrash is extremely wide (it embraces the LXX, the targums, Chronicles, Jubilees, the Mekilta and Sifre, and Midrash Rabbah) and so he is free to invoke "midrash" to explain any number of phenomena. But some of his explanations of Matthean "expansions" of Mk in the light of the OT are far-fetched. When we speak of the influence of liturgy on the formation of Mt, we certainly do not mean the baroque lectionary theory of Goulder.

[8] L. Vaganay, *Le problème synoptique* (Tournai: Desclée, 1954). For further consideration of Vaganay's hypothesis, see F. McCool, "Revival of Synoptic Source-Criticism," *TS* 17 (1956) 459-493.

Dufour (various blocks of tradition: a sort of Ur-gospel theory),[9] W. Farmer (literary dependence in the sequence: Mt-Lk-Mk),[10] B. C. Butler (priority of Aramaic Mt over Greek Mk),[11] and J. Jeremias and H.-T. Wrege (denial of a written Q known by Mt and Lk).[12] All these critics (and many others) are quite correct in attacking a careless, unexamined acceptance of the two-source hypothesis, just as they are correct in attacking some of the faulty arguments for the two-source hypothesis used in the past. But the two-source hypothesis has not been without its powerful present-day apologists, including most of the "post-Bultmannians," as well as independent scholars like G. Kilpatrick,[13] W. Grundmann,[14] E. Schweizer,[15] J. Fitzmyer,[16] C. Talbert and E. McKnight,[17] D. Hare,[18] and J. D. Kingsbury.[19] R. Morgenthaler has even provided the

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[9] X. Léon-Dufour, "Bulletin d'exégèse du Nouveau Testament. Théologie de Matthieu et paroles de Jésus," *RSR* 50 (1962) 90-111; cf. his *"Redaktionsgeschichte* of Matthew and Literary Criticism," in *Jesus and Man's Hope I* (eds. D. Hadidian *et al.;* Pittsburgh: Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, 1970) 9-35.

[10] W. Farmer, *The Synoptic Problem* (N. Y.: Macmillan, 1964), and in dependence on him, D. Dungan, "Mark — the Abridgement of Matthew and Luke," in *Jesus and Man's Hope I,* 51-97.

[11] B. C. Butler, *The Originality of St. Matthew. A Critique of the Two-Document Hypothesis* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1951).

[12] J. Jeremias, "Zur Hypothese einer schriftlichen Logienquelle Q," in *Abba* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1966) 90-92; in dependence on him, H.-T. Wrege, *Die Überlieferungsgeschichte der Bergpredigt* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1968). Schweizer, *Das Evangelium nach Matthäus,* 2, while holding to a written Q, allows that some traditions common to Mt and Lk came to them in oral form. G. Schille, "Bemerkungen zur Formgeschichte des Evangeliums. II. Das Evangelium des Matthäus als Katechismus," *NTS* 4 (1957-58) 101-114, rejects Q, but does not offer a viable alternative. Goulder, *Midrash and Lection,* xiii, holds that Mt had only Mk before him — no Q, no M, and very little oral tradition. He holds that most of what Mt has in addition to Mk is to be attributed to midrashic activity and lectionary usage. Where these do not suffice, he invokes the Pauline corpus (which Mt supposedly knew). His explanation of the Q- and M-material as the result of midrashic activity on Mk in the light of a Jewish festal lectionary is over-subtle and over-ingenious.

[13] G. Kilpatrick, *The Origins;* note the perceptive remark on pp. 101-103: it is often argued against the two-source theory that in some passages Mt is more in accordance with Jewish conditions than is Mk. The presupposition is: more Jewish, more original. But this is debatable. If, at an earlier date and in Gentile surroundings, Gentile customs could influence the presentation of the sayings of Jesus, there is no reason why, at a later date and in a strongly Jewish church, Jewish customs should not adjust sayings anew to Jewish ways.

[14] W. Grundmann, *Das Evangelium nach Matthäus*[3] (Berlin: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 1972) 16-27.

[15] Schweizer, *Das Evangelium nach Matthäus,* 1-2.

[16] J. Fitzmyer, "The Priority of Mark and the 'Q' Source in Luke," *Jesus and Man's Hope I,* 131-170 (with a good defense of Q). — In recent years, there has been a proliferation of studies on Q, its origin, development, and theology. For further bibliography and discussion, see Lührmann, *Redaktion;* P. Hoffmann, *Studien zur Theologie der Logienquelle* (Münster: Aschendorff, 1972); and S. Schulz, *Q. Die Spruchquelle der Evangelisten* (Zürich: Theologischer Verlag, 1972).

[17] C. Talbert and E. McKnight, "Can the Griesbach Hypothesis Be Falsified?" *JBL* 91 (1972) 338-368 (aimed especially against Farmer's hypothesis).

[18] Hare, *The Theme,* 80-81; also an oral communication to the present writer.

[19] J. D. Kingsbury, *The Parables of Jesus in Matthew 13* (Richmond: John Knox Press, 1969) 12.

two-source hypothesis with a thorough statistical basis.[20] Experience has shown that the best support of the two-source hypothesis is perhaps not the positive argumentation for it, but rather any and every alternative solution offered to replace it. After reading some of the convoluted theories of opponents, one comes away convinced that, while the two-source theory is not perfect, it is certainly preferable by far to any alternative offered today.[21] The two-source theory enjoys not absolute certitude but practical viability. The same cannot be said of its rivals.

B. Form and Redaction Criticism

Building upon nineteenth-century source criticism, we also take for granted and will employ the various forms of the critical method that have been developed in the twentieth century: form criticism (as developed for the NT by K. L. Schmidt,[22] M. Dibelius,[23] and R. Bultmann[24]), tradition criticism (in matters of definition we adopt the distinctions espoused by K. Koch),[25] and redaction criticism (developed for Mk by W. Marxsen,[26] for Lk by H. Conzelmann,[27] and for Mt by G. Bornkamm and his disciples, G. Barth and H. Held[28]).

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[20] R. Morgenthaler, *Statistische Synopse* (Zürich: Gotthelf, 1971).

[21] E.g., Butler's objections against the two-document hypothesis make one pause to think. But his own solution involves composing a novel, not a hypothesis (pp. 165-169: St. Matthew wrote the gospel in Aramaic; all the Twelve took copies with them as a memory-aid; Peter used a copy, but his speech was rough and he omitted the long sermons; St. Mark copied down what Peter said, but checked it against Matthew's work). On all this, see Sand's remarks in *Gesetz*, 9. — E. Sanders, on the other hand, avoids the problem of the viable alternative by simply not offering a concrete alternative. He restricts himself to observing that Lk probably knew Mt and that the relationships among the synoptists are more complicated than heretofore imagined. But, since a choice of a solution involves choosing the relatively best hypothesis from among a number of available options, Sanders' critique can be considered effective only if and when he offers a really concrete alternative. For Sanders' views, see his *The Tendencies of the Synoptic Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1969), "The Argument from Order and the Relationship between Matthew and Luke," *NTS* 15 (1968-69) 249-261, and "The Overlaps of Mark and Q and the Synoptic Problem," *NTS* 19 (1972-73) 453-465. — One of the most recently proposed solutions to the synoptic problem is that of P. Benoit and M.-E. Boismard, *Synopse des quatre évangiles en français* (Paris: Cerf, I, 1966; II, 1972). The theory rests on four basic documents and intermediary redactions of the gospels. The relationships among the documents and the stages of redaction are quite complex (see the diagram in II, 17). The very complexity of the solution offends against the methodological canon of economy or parsimony. Cf. also the survey article of L. Sabourin, "Recent Gospel Studies," *Biblical Theology Bulletin* 3 (1973) 283-315, especially 306-315.

[22] K. L. Schmidt, *Der Rahmen der Geschichte Jesu*[2] (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1964).

[23] M. Dibelius, *Die Formgeschichte des Evangeliums*[6] (Tübingen: Mohr, 1971).

[24] R. Bultmann, *Geschichte der synoptischen Tradition*[8] (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1970), with *Ergänzungsheft*[4] (1971); for the preparation of this thesis, the third edition of the *Ergänzungsheft* (1958) was also consulted.

[25] K. Koch, *Was ist Formgeschichte?* (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1967); cf. H. Zimmermann, *Neutestamentliche Methodenlehre* (Stuttgart: KBW, 1970).

[26] W. Marxsen, *Der Evangelist Markus*[2] (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1959).

C. Date and Place of Composition

As for the date of Mt,[29] the *terminus a quo* would have to be some time after the composition of Mk, which had come to enjoy quasi-canonical status in Mt's church. Now, most commentators would hold that Mk was written shortly before or after A.D. 70. And a number of considerations would place Mt a good while after that date. Since, for example, the parable of the great supper in Mt's version may contain allusions to the fall of Jerusalem (*pace* K. Rengstorf),[30] and since one does not get the impression of Mt's having been written in the immediate wake of the catastrophe of A.D. 70,[31] a date between 80-90, more likely 90, seems reasonable. A number of other features within the gospel support this relatively late date: the complicated weaving-together of a number of sources (each with its own tradition history), the situation of a Jewish-Christian church becoming increasingly Gentile, the easy assumption of a Gentile mission free from circumcision (Mt 28:16-20; cf. Chapter II of this thesis) and free from food laws (Mt 15:11), the lack of concern about the delay of the parousia (again, Mt 28:16-20), theological reflection on history and eschatology, and an historicizing tendency that sees the life of Jesus as a *heilige Vergangenheit*. More particularly, A.D. 90 seems preferable to A.D. 80 since Mt's church appears to have been already separated from the Jewish synagogue (see below under D). On the other

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[27] H. Conzelmann, *Die Mitte der Zeit* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1st ed.: 1954; 3rd ed.: 1960); citations in this thesis refer to the 3rd ed.

[28] G. Bornkamm - G. Barth - H. Held, *Überlieferung und Auslegung im Matthäusevangelium*[5] (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1968); the fifth edition contains Bornkamm's important essay, "Der Auferstandene und der Irdische." Another trail blazer in Matthean redaction criticism was W. Trilling's *Das Wahre Israel*. The first edition was published in 1959 by St. Benno-Verlag, Leipzig. The third edition, with some notable changes in it, was published in 1964 by Kösel-Verlag, Munich. All references are to the third edition, unless the contrary is explicitly stated. — For a survey of these and other redaction studies, cf. J. Rohde, *Die redaktionsgeschichtliche Methode* (Hamburg: Furche, 1966) and the more satisfying synthesis of S. Schulz, *Die Stunde der Botschaft* (Hamburg: Furche, 1967). For a survey on recent literature on the synoptics in general, cf. H. Conzelmann, "Literaturbericht zu den synoptischen Evangelien," *ThRu* 37 (1972) 220-272, especially 257-263 for Mt.

[29] Such questions as time and place of composition, state of Mt's church, etc. may seem pedestrian and relatively unimportant, but their neglect can have disastrous results; cf. in this regard Sand's criticism of Nepper-Christensen in Sand, *Gesetz*, 4.

[30] K. Rengstorf, "Die Stadt der Mörder (Mt 22,7)," in *Judentum, Urchristentum, Kirche* (Berlin: Töpelmann, 1960) 106-129, claims that the description of the destruction of the city is just a fixed *topos* used to portray punitive expeditions. But the question still remains: Why did Mt go to the trouble of inserting this description into a parable in which it really does not fit (cf. the delay of the supper while the city is destroyed, and also the absence of the theme in the parallel, Lk 14:15-24). The simplest explanation of the data is that Mt (or M) has introduced a reference to the destruction of Jerusalem.

[31] *Contra* J. L. McKenzie, who claims in his commentary on Mt in *The Jerome Biblical Commentary* (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1968) II, 65 (paragraph 15), that the composition of Mt should not be removed too far — in space or in time — from Palestinian Judaism before the Jewish rebellion.

hand, Mt cannot be pushed far into the second century, since Ignatius of Antioch seems to quote from this gospel.[32]

The gospel offers a number of clues as to the place of composition. First of all, Mt wrote his gospel in Greek. Indeed, he generally improves upon Mk's Greek and at times inserts Greek word-plays, some of which would be impossible in Aramaic.[33] Since the gospel was obviously a document meant for public use in the church, composition in Greek indicates that both Mt and his community were Greek-speaking — or at least predominantly so.[34] Yet behind much of Mt's material we find echoes of Semitic linguistic usage, use of Semitic words without translation, interest in and controversy over Jewish customs and rites, a use of rabbinic argumentation, a great amount of space given to the question of the Mosaic Law, and a heavy emphasis on the fulfillment of OT prophecy. Mt's community thus seems to stand on the borderline between the Jewish and the Gentile world. It was, or at least had been, bilingual. It most probably had been heavily Jewish in origin, though it was becoming increasingly Gentile as the first century drew to a close. The fall of Jerusalem,[35] the destruction of Jewish-Christian communities in Palestine — which excludes Palestine itself as a probable place of composition — the Jamnia movement with its *birkat hamminîm*,[36] and within the church the triumph of the Pauline view on circumcision, would all have hastened this change in the make-up of Mt's church.

All these data point to Syria as the most likely location for this meeting point and melting pot of Jewish and Gentile Christians.[37] Since

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[32] Ignatius seems to quote Mt 3:15 in *Ad Smyrn.* I, 1, and Mt 10:16b in *Ad Polyc.* II, 2.

[33] So in 6:16, *aphanizousin-phanōsin;* 21:41, *kakous kakōs apolesai autous* (an insertion into Markan material) — this is a classical Greek play on words (the Gorgian figure of paronomasia, cf. Blass-Debrunner, No. 488) which is also witnessed in Sophocles, *Ajax,* 1391, and Demosthenes 21.204; 24:30: *kopsontai-opsontai.*

[34] The mere fact of Mt's having been composed in Greek superior to Mk's makes composition in Palestine proper improbable, though not absolutely impossible (cf. J. Fitzmyer, "The Languages of Palestine in the First Century A.D.," *CBQ* 32 [1970] 501-531).

[35] On which see S. Brandon, *The Fall of Jerusalem and the Christian Church*[2] (London: SPCK, 1957); Brandon is good in emphasizing the impact of A.D. 70 on the Christian church. But his placing of Mt in Alexandria (cf. pp. 221-232) and his view of it as a polemical writing against Paulinism is unsubstantiated. S. van Tilborg, *The Jewish Leaders in Matthew* (Leiden: Brill, 1972) 172, has tried to revive Brandon's preference for Alexandria, but without notable success. On the importance of the fall of Jerusalem, cf. also J. Lange, *Das Erscheinen des Auferstandenen im Evangelium nach Matthäus* (Würzburg: Echter, 1973) 280-281.

[36] On which, see amongst others D. Hare, *The Theme,* 48-56 and 127. But Hare thinks that Mt belongs to the time immediately preceding the insertion of the *birkat hamminîm* into the Eighteen Benedictions — although he also thinks that the separation between church and synagogue had already taken place in some areas. But W. D. Davies, in *The Setting of the Sermon on the Mount* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1966) 296-297, mentions Mt's use of "your synagogues" and "their synagogues" (e.g., 23:34; 10:17) as possibly reflecting the *birkat hamminîm* and the Jamnian legislation.

[37] This seems to be the choice of the majority of contemporary scholars; among

the Greek language of the gospel would exclude the Aramaic-speaking hinterlands of Syria, since the complicated use of the OT and the reworking of two major Christian documents (Mk and Q) would demand a long and well developed scribal tradition cultivated in the church, and since the very composition of such a lengthy work would involve no little financial cost, an urban center of Hellenistic-Jewish culture, a city where Christianity had been growing for some time, and a commercial hub where the church would be relatively affluent would be indicated. In Syria, Antioch best fulfills these requirements, especially when we remember that Ignatius of Antioch is the first to quote Mt. There is the difficulty, however, that Antioch was from the beginning a Hellenistic church, with some Gentile members. One cannot, therefore, be apodictic in this question. Kilpatrick, for instance, favors one of the commercial cities on the coast of Phoenicia (such as Berytus, Tyre, or Sidon), and certainly such a possibility cannot be excluded.[38]

D. Separation from the Synagogue

Although scholars agree today to some extent in locating Mt's church in time and space, it is more difficult to speak of any scholarly consensus as to whether or not Mt's church was separated from the Jewish synagogue at the time of the gospel's composition. When L. Keck gave a report of some work done by a team of Matthean scholars a few years ago, he remarked that, while all agreed Mt was written for a church defining itself ever more radically against the synagogue, no agreement could be reached on whether or not Mt's church was still within Judaism.[39]

The difficulty of arriving at a certain judgment in this matter can be seen from the fact that G. Bornkamm has, upon reflection, twice shifted his position on the question of separation from the synagogue. In his early essay, "Enderwartung und Kirche im Matthäusevangelium,"[40]

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them we may include G. Strecker, *Der Weg der Gerechtigkeit*[3] (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1971) 37, though he remains hesitant; Schweizer, *Das Evangelium nach Matthäus,* 4-5, seems more certain about the Syrian origin of Mt. Schweizer's arguments for Syria are conveniently summarized in his "Die Kirche des Matthäus," in *Matthäus und seine Gemeinde,* 138-170, especially 138-140.

[38] Cf. Kilpatrick, *Origins,* 133-134. J. Kennard, "The Place of Origin of Matthew's Gospel," *ATR* 31 (1949) 243-246, favors the North Syrian hinterland. Again, this is possible, but in such areas the population would tend to be more heavily semitic in its language than at Antioch. His objections against Antioch (e. g., Mt is totally anti-Pauline and so could not stem from a church which sent out Paul on mission) are incorrect. Mt's gospel is not anti-Pauline; on this point, Davies, *Setting,* 316-341, is quite correct. Moreover, we know from Gal 2 that Paul's relationship to the church at Antioch was not always smooth and that the Hellenists did not proceed unimpeded. Kennard himself has to admit that Mt was distributed to the church at large from Antioch (hardly from the Syrian hinterland!).

[39] L. Keck, "The Sermon on the Mount," *Jesus and Man's Hope I,* 311-322, especially 313.

[40] G. Bornkamm, "Enderwartung und Kirche im Matthäusevangelium," in *Überlie-*

the watch-word is "noch in Verband des Judentums";[41] it has not cut its ties with Judaism.[42] In fact, despite the church's argument with the Pharisees, it stubbornly maintains its ties with Judaism.[43] Naturally, this influences Bornkamm's view of the Law in Mt. Bornkamm disagrees with Kilpatrick, who claims that in Mt the central position which Judaism gave to the Law, the gospel gives to Jesus. Rather, says Bornkamm, Jesus confirms the Law.

There is a slight shift in emphasis in Bornkamm's later essay, "Der Auferstandene und der Irdische."[44] The watch-word is now "in enger Beziehung zu."[45] In this essay Mt seems to be moved closer to Hellenistic Christianity. Mt is explicitly said to be a Hellenistic-Jewish Christian; Bornkamm rejects the possibility of a Gentile-Christian redactor.[46] Mt's gospel is rather a complex reality, consisting of elements from Judaism, the early church, and Hellenistic Christianity, all woven together into a rich but tension-filled unity. Bornkamm insists that this does not mean that Mt was eclectic, but one wonders whether the tension is not in danger of becoming self-contradictory.

A second shift is marked by Bornkamm's more recent essay, "Die Binde- und Lösegewalt in der Kirche des Matthäus."[47] Now the watch-word becomes "geschieden." Speaking of Mt 18:19f., Bornkamm says that here the church is aware that it is cut off from the Jewish community. The church is no longer gathered together about the Torah; rather, it is gathered in the name of Jesus and as such is assured of his presence. The logion in 18:20 was formulated antithetically to the Jewish conception of the Shekinah.[48] So too, Peter's magisterium in 16:18ff is directly concerned with the "supreme Rabbi's" interpretation of the commands of Jesus, not of the Torah. While presenting this new view, Bornkamm insists he does not accept a simple shift from Jewish Christianity to Gentile Christianity. Rather, Mt is a complex phenomenon reflecting the coalescence of Jewish and Hellenistic elements.

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ferung und Auslegung, 13-47. This essay appeared in programmatic form as "Matthäus als Interpret der Herrenworte," *TLZ* 79 (1954) 341-346.

[41] *Ibid.*, 17.

[42] *Ibid.*, 19-20.

[43] *Ibid.*, 19 n. 2.

[44] G. Bornkamm, "Der Auferstandene und der Irdische," *Überlieferung und Auslegung*, 289-310 (all references are made to the essay as found in this volume); originally the essay was printed in the Bultmann-Festschrift, *Zeit und Geschichte* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1964) 171-191.

[45] *Ibid.*, 306.

[46] *Ibid.*, 298-299.

[47] G. Bornkamm, "Die Binde- und Lösegewalt in der Kirche des Matthäus," in *Geschichte und Glaube II* (Munich: Kaiser, 1971) 37-50; also published in somewhat different form as "The Authority to 'Bind' and 'Loose' in the Church in Matthew's Gospel," in *Jesus and Man's Hope I*, 37-50. References here are based on the German text, which differs notably in some places from the corresponding English text.

[48] *Ibid.*, 40.

Thus, on the question of the church's separation from the synagogue, Bornkamm has created over the years a spectrum of opinions, on which other writers may be conveniently located. We begin with those who share the views of the "early" Bornkamm and then move across the spectrum to those who would agree with the "later" Bornkamm.

G. Barth, whose essay was accepted as a dissertation in 1955,[49] naturally follows the early Bornkamm. Mt's church seeks to maintain its ties with the Jewish people, but the situation is strained.[50] Barth seems to experience some difficulty in squaring this view with the fierce judgment on Israel expressed in such passages as 8:11f and 21:43.

The most extensive development of the views of the early Bornkamm is probably R. Hummel's monograph.[51] But this very development brings to the surface an apparent contradiction in the position of the early Bornkamm. Mt's church stands in opposition to Judaism.[52] It is not Jewish in the sense of pure Judaism or later Ebionitism; circumcision and the Gentile mission are no longer a problem.[53] The church no longer takes part in Jewish synagogue worship. But Judaism still has jurisdiction over the Jewish-Christians, who are still tied to the synagogue.[54] Mt is trying to avoid a definitive break with the Jewish community. That is why he takes over such logia as 23:2f; they have a tactical rather than a theological intent. For this reason, Mt still wants the teaching authority of the scribes and Pharisees to be acknowledged in principle.[55] But faced with 15:12-14 (harsh judgment of the Pharisees) and many indications that the church has begun to develop its own legal decisions, rules of piety, and spiritual jurisdiction, Hummel has to admit that the inner loosening from Pharisaic Judaism has already taken place. But the external bond remained until Judaism broke it.[56] In the appendix-like chapter six, added in the second edition, Hummel tries to lessen the strain of these internal contradictions, while warding off Strecker's and Trilling's distinction between Jewish-Christian tradi-

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[49] G. Barth, "Das Gesetzesverständnis des Evangelisten Matthäus," *Überlieferung und Auslegung*, 54-154.

[50] *Ibid.*, 104.

[51] R. Hummel, *Die Auseinandersetzung zwischen Kirche und Judentum im Matthäusevangelium*[2] (Munich: Kaiser, 1966). This second edition has an additional chapter (VI, pp. 162-173), added to the first edition (1963); it is to this expanded second edition that references are made.

[52] *Ibid.*, 20.

[53] *Ibid.*, 26.

[54] *Ibid.*, 30-31. But do the sayings about persecution reflect the time of the composition of Mt, or a slightly earlier period?

[55] We might well ask how this squares with 16:11f and 16:18f, especially when Hummel gives a very fine exegesis of the latter pericope: Peter is the supreme Rabbi for the church (p. 63). Hummel's contradictory picture seems to result from not sufficiently distinguishing between tradition and redaction (16:11-12 being an especially clear example of Mt's own view inserted into the Markan material; cf. the Lukan parallel).

[56] Hummel, *Auseinandersetzung*, 159.

tion and Gentile redaction — an attempt that cannot be pronounced successful.[57]

Others who hold views similar to those of the early Bornkamm and Hummel would include W. D. Davies (the fight between Judaism and Christianity was for Mt still a struggle *intra muros*)[58] and H. von Campenhausen (Mt's church has not yet been definitively separated from Judaism).[59] Perhaps the most "liberal" expression of this "not-yet-separated" school would be that of D. M. Smith, who thinks that the deep Jewish-Christian roots of Mt's church had not yet been completely broken. Yet, says Smith, in principle Mt's position on Jesus and the Law makes such a break inevitable.[60] Certainly, to go beyond Smith's concession is to march into the opposite camp.

This opposite camp, made up of those who in various ways would agree with the later Bornkamm's judgment of "geschieden,"[61] likewise contains some impressive proponents. Besides the later Bornkamm, we could enumerate Kilpatrick,[62] Strecker,[63] Trilling,[64] E. Haenchen,[65] R. Martin,[66] K. Stendahl,[67] A. Kretzer,[68] E. Schweizer,[69] J. Lange,[70] A. Sand,[71] and H. Frankemölle,[72] to name only the most distinguished. But perhaps the most extensive and cogent treatment is that given by Hare. Hare thinks that Mt and his followers had already left the Jewish synagogue and the Jewish quarter by the time the gospel was written.[73]

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[57] For example, Hummel had earlier used 23:2f to help establish the fact that Mt's church still acknowledged the magisterium of the Pharisees; in doing this, he gave no serious consideration to 16:11f. But on p. 165 he acknowledges that Jewish-Christian material is in part simply preserved by Mt and is corrected by other passages, e.g., 23:2 by 16:11f.

[58] Davies, *Setting*, 332.

[59] H. von Campenhausen, *Die Entstehung der christlichen Bibel* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1968) 22.

[60] D. M. Smith, "The Old Testament in the New," 3-65, especially 49.

[61] It must be emphasized that the only point of agreement here is on the separation of the church from the synagogue.

[62] Kilpatrick, *Origins*, 111.

[63] Strecker, *Weg*, especially 138-142. Strecker points out that 23:2f is older tradition that is contradicted not only by 16:11f and 16:18f but also by the later parts of ch. 23.

[64] Trilling, "Matthäus, das kirchliche Evangelium" in *Gestalt und Anspruch des Neuen Testaments* (Würzburg: Echter, 1969) 186-199, especially 196.

[65] E. Haenchen, "Matthäus 23," in *Gott und Mensch* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1965) 29-54, especially 30-31, 34, and 43.

[66] R. Martin, "St. Matthew's Gospel in Recent Study," *ET* 80 (1969) 132-136, especially 136.

[67] Stendahl, *School*, xiii (in the preface to the second edition).

[68] A. Kretzer, *Die Herrschaft der Himmel und die Söhne des Reiches* (Würzburg: Echter, 1971) 107 n. 60.

[69] Schweizer, *Das Evangelium nach Matthäus*, 5; also his essay, "Christus und Gemeinde im Matthäusevangelium," in *Matthäus und seine Gemeinde*, 9-68, especially 12.

[70] Lange, *Erscheinen*, 270 n. 65.

[71] Sand, *Gesetz*, 27.

[72] Frankemölle, *Jahwebund*, 225.

[73] Hare, *Theme*, 105 n. 3.

He believes that this separation was not caused (for the most part) by formal persecution or by the *birkat hamminîm*. But whatever the cause, Mt and his community now look at Judaism from a vantage point outside the synagogue.[74] Two arguments brought forth by Hare are especially weighty. (1) Mt has nine references to Jewish synagogues. Wherever the context fails to designate the synagogue as belonging to "the hypocrites" (the context being clear in 6:2, 5; 23:6, 34), Mt adds *autōn* to the synagogues (4:23; 9:35; 10:17; 12:9; 13:54). Granted that Mk at times will put *autōn* after *synagōgē* (Mk 1:23, 39), nevertheless he is not consistent in this usage. And Lk, although he uses *synagōgē* fifteen times in his gospel, has *autōn* as a modifier only once. The Matthean usage suggests that, while for Luke the synagogue had always been a foreign institution, for Mt it has *become* a foreign institution.[75] (2) Mt shows his position and the position of his church vis-à-vis Israel by his redactional insertion (21:43) into the parable of the evil tenants. In Mk, the allegory, in which the vineyard represents Israel (cf. Is 5:7), indicts only the religious leaders. Mt, on the contrary, indicts the whole people. For Mt the vineyard is the symbol not of Israel but of the Kingdom of God. The Kingdom had been Israel's special prerogative, but now it has been snatched from Israel and given to a people who will bear its fruits. Thus Mt displays an unrelieved pessimism about Israel. There is no idea of a remnant (contrast Rom 11!); the rejection of Israel is final and permanent. Here Hare is firm against Trilling: there is no true Israel, faithful Israel, or new Israel, which is contrasted with a false, faithless, or old Israel. The Kingdom is transferred from Israel (the empirical Israel is the only Israel) to another people, non-Israel. Such a view of Israel would hardly be possible for a Jewish-Christian still tied to the Jewish people and the Jewish synagogue.[76]

While agreeing with Hare on the separation of Mt's church from the synagogue, we think Hare exaggerates slightly in declaring that Mt's church has abandoned all missionary effort on behalf of the Jews.[77] Perhaps more balanced is the view of Schweizer, who holds that all dialogue with the Jewish synagogue had not yet been broken off. While 27:25 shows the definitive separation between synagogue and church, hope for the conversion of Jews was still not buried.[78]

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[74] *Ibid.*, 125-127.

[75] For this first argument, see especially *ibid.*, 104-105.

[76] For this second argument, see *ibid.*, 151-158.

[77] *Ibid.*, 147-148; Hare argues that *panta ta ethnē* in Mt 28:19 cannot mean "all the nations" (including the Jews), but must mean "all the Gentiles" (excluding the Jews); for more on this, see below in Chapter II.

[78] Schweizer, *Das Evangelium nach Matthäus*, 5.

E. Jewish or Gentile Redactor?

The division of opinion becomes even sharper when we move to the question of whether the final redactor of Mt was a Jewish Christian or a Gentile Christian. Certainly, up until the last few decades, the number of scholars favoring a Jewish-Christian redactor was overwhelming.[79] And yet even the choice of a Jewish Christian admitted of nuances. The label "Jewish Christian" allowed for various degrees of conservatism or liberalism. The author could be conceived as a conservative Jewish Christian propounding a neo-legalism: so B. Bacon.[80] One could imagine him to have been a converted Jewish rabbi of the school of Johanan ben Zakkai: so von Dobschütz.[81] E. Abel suggests that there were two redactors: the first was an anti-Gentile Jewish Christian, while the second was anti-Jewish and pro-Gentile.[82]

The general tendency of more recent research, though, has been to take a more moderate view: Mt was a Hellenistic-Jewish Christian, liberated from an earlier stringent Jewish Christianity which opposed the Gentile mission and upheld the Pharisaical view of the Law. As one would expect, this is usually the view of recent writers who hold that Mt's church was still bound to the synagogue.[83] But even some authors who hold for separation still maintain that Mt was a Hellenistic-Jewish Christian: so Kilpatrick,[84] Stendahl,[85] Hare,[86] and Kretzer.[87] It is

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[79] Nepper-Christensen, *Das Matthäusevangelium,* 13-36, gives the state of research up to the fifties. Noting the almost universal choice of a Jewish-Christian redactor, he complains that the choice too often represents an unexamined presupposition.

[80] B. Bacon, "Jesus and the Law," *JBL* 47 (1928) 203-231, especially 229.

[81] E. von Dobschütz, "Matthäus als Rabbi und Katechet," *ZNW* 27 (1928) 338-348. — Goulder, *Midrash and Lection,* suggests that Mt was not a rabbi but a scribe (i.e., a provincial schoolmaster — cf. pp. 5-27). But Goulder does not spend much time establishing the validity of this distinction for the first century A.D. Moreover, Goulder seems to want it both ways. When Mt seems to commit some error as regards rabbinical skills or exegesis, Goulder will plead that Mt is *only* a scribe (p. 22). Yet most of Goulder's argument presupposes a creative writer of great skill and vast knowledge of rabbinical traditions. It is also a bit strange that this limited scribe in a small town in Syria thinks in Aramaic yet writes in an educated Greek with a wide vocabulary (cf. p. 121).

[82] E. Abel, "Who Wrote Matthew?" *NTS* 17 (1971) 138-152. We are left wondering who finally put the whole gospel together as we have it now. Whether it was the second "Matthew" or someone else, Abel is still left with the problem with which he started: How could any individual include so much contradictory material in one work? Doubling the redactor does not solve the problem.

[83] So, e.g., Hummel, *Auseinandersetzung,* 159 (with a reference to von Dobschütz); cf. Bornkamm's introductory remarks to the fifth edition of *Überlieferung und Auslegung,* 10, and, in the same volume, "Der Auferstandene und der Irdische," 298-299; so also von Campenhausen, *Entstehung,* 17 n. 49; G. Eichholz, "Die Aufgabe einer Auslegung der Bergpredigt," in *Tradition und Interpretation* (Munich: Kaiser 1965) 35-56, especially 47-48; K. Tagawa, "People and Community in the Gospel of Matthew," *NTS* 16 (1969-70) 149-162, especially 157 n. 3 (continued from p. 156).

[84] Kilpatrick, *Origins,* 120, notes the change of the attributive participle to a predicative participle in Mt 22:23, but sees in the change only Mt's intention to make the Sadducees stand for all non-Christian, non-Pharisaic Jews.

surprising how often the author will be declared a Jewish Christian without the arguments for this position being closely examined. When they are articulated, the arguments usually stress the Jewish tone, coloration, mode of thinking and speaking, interests, and subject-matter which have already been mentioned in Section C of this chapter. Sometimes precise linguistic phenomena will be brought forward to prove the author's Jewish origins.[88] Rabbinic parallels to Matthean tradition — or, even better, to Matthean redaction[89] — are stressed. Yet it is interesting to see how

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[85] Stendahl, *School*, xiii; cf. R. Schnackenburg, "Die Vollkommenheit des Christen nach den Evangelien," *Geist und Leben* 32 (1959) 420-433, especially 420.

[86] One might at first be surprised that such a strong proponent of a fierce break between church and synagogue firmly maintains the Jewish Christianity of the author of Mt. K. Clark, "The Gentile Bias of Matthew," *JBL* 66 (1947) 165-172, had already stressed that the idea of the permanent rejection of Israel would be an impossible main theme of a gospel written by a Jewish Christian. Hare replies to this objection in *Theme*, 165: "The present author finds Clark's thesis unacceptable, primarily because it fails to explain the intensity of Matthew's anti-Pharisaism, which, as we have found, belongs especially to the redactional elements of the gospel. Whereas the Gentile Luke speaks of the synagogue with the detachment natural to one for whom it is a foreign institution, Matthew speaks as one for whom it has only recently become an alien institution." On p. 170, Hare concludes as follows: "Indeed, were it not for the persecution [of the church by the synagogue] it would be difficult to avoid ascribing the First Gospel to a Gentile simply on the basis of its view of Israel. The bitterness of the persecution and the frustration of a fruitless mission are sufficient, however, to account for so pessimistic a view of Israel on the part of a Jewish-Christian author." — But one might ask whether the reference to persecution, break, and bitter looking back (which certainly tells us a great deal about the past history of Mt's church) really tells us all that much about Mt himself.

[87] Kretzer, *Herrschaft*, 12-13.

[88] E.g., J. Jeremias, "Die Muttersprache des Evangelisten Matthäus," in *Abba*, 255-260. Jeremias tries to show that Mt's form of the *Šᵉmaᶜ* in 22:37 and his use of *Hosanna* in 21:9, 15, show that the author was Jewish, speaking Aramaic and praying in Hebrew. But the proof from the *Šᵉmaᶜ* remains inconclusive when one considers the wide variety of textual variants of the *Šᵉmaᶜ* known to have existed in the ancient world. Mt's version could well have been transmitted from the Jewish liturgy to the Jewish-Christian liturgy of his church. Such a liturgical formula tells us much more about the history of Mt's church than it does about the final redactor. As for *Hosanna*, Jeremias, and after him, E. Lohse, "Hosianna," in *Charis kai Sophia* (ed. E. Luck; Leiden: Brill, 1964) 113-119, do show that this cry for help did evolve into a cry of joy and praise. But as Lohse notes, this usage existed in the pre-Christian Jewish liturgy and thus passed over into Christian liturgical usage. As van Tilborg intimates (*Jewish Leaders*, 159-160), Mt probably took over his formulation from the Jewish-Christian liturgy of his church. Thus, once again, the liturgical usage tells us nothing about the Jewishness of Mt himself. An even less likely view of the language of the author and his gospel is presented by P. Gaechter, both in his commentary, *Das Matthäus Evangelium* (Innsbruck: Tyrolia-Verlag, 1963) 19, and in his short study, *Die literarische Kunst im Matthäus-Evangelium* (Stuttgart: KBW, no date) 5-6 and 31. According to Gaechter, Mt (the original Apostle) wrote the gospel in Hebrew, not Aramaic.

[89] E.g., H. Merkel, "Das Gleichnis von den 'Ungleichen Söhnen,' (Matth. xxi. 28-32)," *NTS* 20 (1974) 254-261: that Mt is a Jewish Christian is proven by the fact that 21:28-32, a parable with rabbinic parallels, is a redactional creation of Mt. — But Merkel never gives convincing proof that the parable is a totally redactional creation, instead of being an earlier parable with heavy Matthean redaction; the latter possibility is cavalierly dismissed on p. 260 n. 61.

Schulz, after carefully weighing all these arguments in his study of redaction criticism, notes how many of them could hold true of Mk or Lk as well, and how the Jewish traits of Mt's gospel could be assigned to the tradition Mt has received. Schulz finally avoids a firm decision in the Jewish-Christian *versus* Gentile-Christian controversy.[90]

Are there, then, any counter-arguments that would incline us to favor a Gentile redactor? A vocal minority, consisting notably of K. Clark, P. Nepper-Christensen, G. Strecker, W. Trilling, R. Walker,[91] S. van Tilborg,[92] W. Pesch,[93] and H. Frankemölle,[94] maintains that these exist. To begin with, the fiery polemics against Pharisaism and Israel itself, the universal outlook and sympathy for the Gentile mission, in short, all the reasons that make the separation of Mt's church from the synagogue the more likely hypothesis (cf. Section D), move critics like Clark to posit a Gentile redactor as the more probable solution.[95] But to arrive at the unusual decision that Mt was a Gentile, most critics would demand more precise proof. It seems to us that such proof is available. (1) There are a few passages in Mt where the redactor seems to make mistakes about the Hebrew language, about Jewish parties, laws, etc. — matters which an intelligent, well-educated, highly articulate and artistic Jew should have known.[96] (a) One example of such apparent mistakes is the mention of two animals in the entrance of Jesus into Jerusalem (21:2, 7).[97] Mt is

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[90] Schulz, *Stunde,* 160-162.

[91] R. Walker, *Die Heilsgeschichte im ersten Evangelium* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1967), especially 127-128.

[92] van Tilborg, *Jewish Leaders,* 171.

[93] W. Pesch, "Theologische Aussagen der Redaktion von Matthäus 23," *Orientierung an Jesus* (Freiburg: Herder, 1973) 286-299, especially 298.

[94] Frankemölle, *Jahwebund,* 200.

[95] Clark, "Gentile Bias," 166.

[96] Important for this argument is a keen awareness of the great mental powers and erudition the redactor shows in the composition of his gospel. Mt possesses no mean literary talent; he improves Mark's Greek and skillfully assembles heterogeneous traditions into complicated architectonic structures. As C. Moule says, in "St. Matthew's Gospel: Some Neglected Features," in *Studia Evangelica II* (ed. F. Cross, Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1964, 91-99) 93, Mt was a well-educated writer, a scribe in the secular, not rabbinic sense.

[97] The problem of the animals in 21:2,7 has called forth an abundant literature. Besides the commentaries, we can mention here only the more important studies: C. C. Torrey, *Documents of the Primitive Church* (N.Y.: Harper & Brothers, 1941) 75-76; D. Stanley, "Etudes matthéennes: L'entrée messianique à Jérusalem," in *Sciences ecclésiastiques* 6 (1954) 93-106; Nepper-Christensen, *Das Matthäusevangelium,* 144-148; S. McCasland, "Matthew Twists the Scriptures," *JBL* 80 (1961) 143-148; J. Blenkinsopp, "The Hidden Messiah and His Entry into Jerusalem," *Scr* 13 (1961) 51-56 and 81-88; B. Lindars, *New Testament Apologetic* (London: SCM, 1961) 113-114; W. Trilling, "Der Einzug in Jerusalem," in *Neutestamentliche Aufsätze* (Regensburg: Pustet, 1963) 303-309; R. Pesch, "Eine alttestamentliche Ausführungsformel im Matthäus-Evangelium," *BZ* 10 (1966) 220-245; Schulz, *Stunde,* 170; R. McConnell, *Law and Prophecy in Matthew's Gospel,* 126-127; Rothfuchs, *Erfüllungszitate,* 81-82; Schweizer, "Observance of the Law and Charismatic Activity in Matthew," *NTS* 16 (1969-70) 213-230, especially 222; P. Zarrella, "L'entrata di Gesù in Gerusalemme nella redazione di Matteo (21, 1-17)," *La scuola cattolica* 98 (1970) 84-112.

obviously dependent on Mk for the narrative,[98] the chief change being one that is a hallmark of Matthean redaction: the insertion of a Reflexionszitat (vs. 4) and the careful underlining of the literal fulfillment of the Reflexionszitat in the life of Jesus (vss. 2 and 7).[99] So literal must be the fulfillment that we have an unimaginable description of Jesus riding on both animals (*kai epekathisen epanō autōn*).[100] Any attempt to soften or change this description does violence to the obvious meaning of the text.[101] But why does Mt give us this strange description? He does so because he understands the text to speak of two separate animals, not the one animal which in fact is mentioned twice because of the Hebraic parallelism. Such a misreading of the intent of the OT text is hardly understandable if the writer is an intelligent, well-educated Jew (the supposed converted rabbi of the school of Johanan ben Zakkai!). And it must be emphasized that there is no convincing explanation for the doubling of the animals except a misunderstanding of the text. The rabbis would indeed at times ignore Hebraic parallelism when ignoring it served their theological purpose.[102] But here in Mt no special theological purpose is served by doubling the animals — except the theological purpose of literal fulfillment, a purpose which indicates that Mt misunderstood the text as literally meaning two animals.[103] Attempts to conjecture that Mt possessed eyewitness knowledge about

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[98] So correctly, Stanley, "Etudes," 97, and many others with him.

[99] Most of the commentators agree on Mt's concern over literal fulfillment here: so, e.g., Trilling, "Einzug," 303 n. 8; Pesch, "Ausführungsformel," 244.

[100] The two animals are first mentioned in the command of Jesus (vs. 2), then mistakenly read into the citation from Zechariah which is sandwiched in between the command and its execution (vs. 5), then taken up again in the accomplishment of Jesus' command (vs. 7); for this pattern of command-accomplishment, see Pesch, "Ausführungsformel." Note how the number two is underlined in vs. 7: first the disciples spread the garments upon both animals and then Jesus sits on both of them. Mt could not emphasize more the exact, literal fulfillment of the OT prophecy.

[101] The attempt to make *epanō autōn* in vs. 7c refer to *ta himatia* in vs. 7b is forced: (1) the parallel *ep' autōn ... epanō autōn* speaks against a change in meaning for *autōn*; (2) as Pesch points out, "Ausführungsformel," 244, making *epanō autōn* refer to the garments misses the precise function of vs. 7c: it shows the exact fulfillment of vs. 5 (... *epibebēkōs epi onon kai epi pōlon huion hypozygiou*); (3) even if the second *autōn* were referred to the garments, we would still be left with the problem of Jesus' sitting on both animals, since Mt has just said that the garments were placed on both animals.

[102] So in this very passage from Zechariah! Cf. H. Strack - P. Billerbeck, *Kommentar zum Neuen Testament aus Talmud und Midrasch*[5] (Munich: Beck, 1926) I, 842-844: when it suits the rabbis, they divide up the two animals and refer them respectively to the Messiah ben-Joseph and the Messiah ben-David (so *Genesis Rabbah* 75 [48c]); when they are not pressing that particular theological point, they see in the passage simply one donkey. Cf. also the similar exegetical procedure in Jn 19:23-24, where the parallelism is broken for a reason: the symbolic significance of the seamless tunic as opposed to Christ's other garments. No such theological purpose or symbolic meaning can be found in Mt 21:2, 7.

[103] It is not clear which text form is reflected in Mt 21:5; Gundry, *The Use of the Old Testament*, 120, sees various contacts with the MT, LXX, Aquila, OT Peshitta, and the Targum; but certainly it is not simply the particular text form used that has moved Mt to see here two distinct animals; some further explanation is called for.

the two animals which actually figured in the original event,[104] or that Mt mentions the two animals to indicate by subtle exegesis the same point that the earlier tradition made by stating that the colt had never been ridden before,[105] or that Mt reflects the fact that the young colt would be unruly without its mother,[106] are ludicrous. We are left with only one possible conclusion. The doubling of the animals stems from a misunderstanding of Hebraic parallelism, a misunderstanding much more intelligible in a Gentile redactor than in a converted Jewish rabbi, or in any well-educated Jewish Christian.[107] (b) A second slip on the part of Mt seems to be his reference to the Sadducees in 22:23. Once again, Mt (like Lk) is depedent on Mk (12:18). Mk reads in vs. 18: *kai erchontai Saddoukaioi pros auton, hoitines legousin anastasin mē einai, kai epērōtōn auton legontes.* The *hoitines* indicates who the Sadducees are as a group. It is a definition of the Sadducees' position, not just a description of what some particular Sadducees were saying to Jesus at one particular moment (the introductory *legontes* follows the *hoitines legousin* clause). Lk follows the Markan conception, while changing the grammatical construction (Lk 20:27): *proselthontes de tines tōn Saddoukaiōn, hoi antilegontes anastasin mē einai, epērōtēsan auton* (vs. 28) *legontes.* Again, there is first a definition of the Sadducees' permanent position as a group (*hoi antilegontes*),[108] and then a report of what these particular Sadducees said (*legontes*) in keeping with and as a consequence of their general position. The author of the third gospel gives the same description of the Sadducees' ideology in Acts (4:1-2; 23:8). The same basic description is given by Josephus (*Antiqu.*, XVIII. i. 3-4; *War,* II. viii. 14) and by the Talmud.[109] The fact that denial of the resurrection was basic to the Sadducean position can thus be presumed as common knowledge among Jews and even among some Christians of the first century A.D. The testimony of Josephus and Lk-Acts shows that the obliteration of the Sadducees as an influential party in Judaism after A.D. 70 did not obliterate all knowledge of their fundamental position on the resurrection. All the stranger, then, is the change Mt introduces into the Markan tradition (Mt 22:23): *en ekeinēi tēi hēmerai prosēlthon autōi Saddoukaioi, legontes mē einai anastasin kai epērōtēsan auton* (vs. 24) *legontes.* Mt has made the attribu-

[104] So Nepper-Christensen, *Das Matthäusevangelium,* 147.

[105] Cf. Lindars, *New Testament Apologetic,* 113-114.

[106] R. Gundry, *The Use of the Old Testament,* 197-199, especially 199.

[107] "Misunderstanding" may seem a blunt term, but it is commonly used in the discussion; so, e.g., McCasland, "Matthew Twists the Scriptures," 144; Trilling, "Der Einzug," 303 n. 8.

[108] The attributive participle actually modifies the genitive *Saddoukaiōn,* but the koine often ignores the proper agreement of participles. Even Lk is not immune from this failing; cf. M. Zerwick, *Graecitas Biblica*[5] (Rome: Pontificio Istituto Biblico, 1966) 6 (No. 14), who cites Lk 20:27 as an example.

[109] For citations, cf. Strack-Billerbeck, *Kommentar* IV, 343-344.

tive clause or participle (Mk: *hoitines legousin;* Lk: *hoi antilegontes*) predicative, without any real difference from the *legontes* beginning vs. 24. *Legontes mē einai anastasin* no longer describes the basic position of the Sadducees, but simply reports summarily what these particular Sadducees were saying or thinking as they approached Jesus. Once again, the only viable explanation of this garbling of the Markan tradition is ignorance of the Jewish situation *before and after* A.D. 70. Neither before nor after that date could any well-educated Jew make such a mistake in describing the Sadducees. Even Lk seems better informed on this point than Mt. But are we pressing one passage too far? The answer is that we are not dealing with just one passage. Mt 16:11-12 (a highly redactional passage) shows the same lack of knowledge of the Jewish situation, both before and after A.D. 70. In a clear addition to the Markan tradition (which ends at Mk 8:21), Mt repeats that the leaven is the leaven *tōn Pharisaiōn kai Saddoukaiōn* (Mt 16:11b; cf. 16:6 as opposed to Mk 8:15). Then Mt states that the disciples understood that Jesus was not talking about avoiding leaven in bread; rather, he meant avoiding *tēs didachēs tōn Pharisaiōn kai Saddoukaiōn.* Noteworthy here is the singular noun with article (*tēs didachēs*), on which depend the two genitives modified by the one definite article (*tōn*). Taken literally, Mt 16:12 speaks of *the* doctrine common to the Pharisees and Sadducees as one entity, set over against the teaching of Jesus. No Jew aware of the conflicts in Judaism before A.D. 70, and *a fortiori* no Jew aware of the Pharisees' triumphant branding of the Sadducees' doctrine as heretical after A.D. 70 (cf. *Sanhedrin* 10.1!) could write such a sentence. Mt must be considered to have been ignorant of the exact doctrine of the Sadducees. Again, this is extremely difficult to reconcile with the hypothesis of a Jewish-Christian redactor, while it squares well with the hypothesis of a Gentile-Christian redactor.[110]

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[110] On this, see, amongst others, van Tilborg, *Jewish Leaders*, 35. The unhistorical yoking of Pharisees and Sadducees is noted by R. Meyer and K. Weiss in "Pharisaios," *TDNT* IX, 11-48, and is put down to Mt's ignorance or indifference. But the ultimate reason for this strange state of affairs is never given. — The objection might be raised that, as many redaction critics have noted, Mt tends to lump together all the Jewish groups as enemies of Jesus. But this very tendency, when it reaches the extreme point of predicating *one* teaching of the Pharisees and Sadducees, speaks in favor of a Gentile redactor. — Other secondary arguments could be brought forward to show that the redactor is ignorant of Jewish Law and language, but not all of these arguments are as clear-cut as the two we have presented above. A few examples of these arguments follow. (1) In the Markan story of the healing of the man with the withered hand on the Sabbath (Mk 3:1-6), Mt inserts an argument drawn from the supposedly acknowledged liceity of drawing out a sheep which has fallen into a pit on the Sabbath (Lk presents a similar tradition in a story proper to him, the healing of the man with dropsy, Lk 14:1-6). But no such permission was known in rabbinic Judaism (cf. Strecker, *Weg*, 19, where other similar cases are given). (2) The highly redactional Mt 27:62-66 could be more easily composed by someone not too sensitive to the improbability of having the high priests and

(2) A second series of arguments rests on Matthean linguistic usage.[111] Contrary to popular conceptions, Mt does not always represent a more Semitic vocabulary and linguistic usage than Mk (and even at times Lk!). The pleonastic *archesthai* + infinitive — an Aramaism — is avoided more in Mt than in Mk or Lk (rarely does it occur in Matthean redaction). Likewise, Mt tends to avoid the constantly repeated *euthys* of Mk; even if we include the more Matthean *eutheōs* in the count, Mt's use of the adverb comes to only 18 times, while Mk's use comes to between 42 and 45 times (depending on variant readings). Mt has taken about 14 of these occurrences of *euthys* from Mk; he inserts it redactionally only twice. The Aramaic loan-words in Mt usually come from tradition; a number of Aramaic words in Mk are dropped, with only the Greek equivalent retained. As we have noted above, Mt's general tendency is to improve the highly Semitic Greek of Mk in the direction of more acceptable Greek usage.[112]

Looking at all the arguments on both sides, we must frankly admit that no one argument or set of arguments is compelling and decisive. One's prudential judgment must be based on the preponderance of evidence and converging lines of probability. We are inclined to think that it is more probable that the final redactor of Mt was a Gentile Christian. But we must admit that the evidence is not so clear-cut as to exclude the hypothesis of an enlightened Hellenistic-Jewish Christian who has universalistic views and Gentile sympathies. Such a Jewish Christian could even be thought of as having once shared the narrow views of his older tradition and as having developed slowly towards his present position (thus, another reason for keeping the older Jewish-

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the Pharisees negotiating with Pilate on the Sabbath of Passover week. (3) K. Clark, "Gentile Bias," 170, claims that Mt's unique use of the term *phylakteria* (Mt 23:5) reflects an author of Gentile origin; for this judgment, he appeals to G. Fox, "The Matthean Misrepresentation of Tephillin," in *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 1 (1942) 373-377; but see on the contrary W. Grundmann, *Das Evangelium nach Matthäus*, 485. (4) It is claimed that Mt misunderstood the meaning of *Iskarioth* (so Strecker, *Weg*, 29). But this presupposes that modern scholarship is certain of the derivation of the word — which is not the case.

[111] For detailed consideration of various points, cf. Strecker, *Weg*, 19-35. Not all the points he mentions are of equal validity; we mention only the more salient facts here.

[112] While Strecker's arguments have an impressive cumulative effect, some of his arguments are best omitted. (1) For instance, the argument from the type of texts used in OT citations is best avoided. The discoveries at Qumran have made the whole question of textual traditions in the first centuries B.C. and A.D. terribly complex, and no certain conclusions can be drawn at present from the various text forms in Mt. Gundry, *The Use of the Old Testament*, has done a great service by drawing attention to the bewildering complexity of text forms in Mt — though we doubt that the conclusions he draws in Parts II, III, and IV of his work (pp. 151-234) will be generally accepted. (2) Also, the argument from Mt's supposed ignorance of Palestinian geography is not probative. Even if such ignorance is proved (something not to be taken for granted!), we might still conclude that the author was a Hellenistic-Jewish Christian who had never lived in or seen Palestine.

Christian material). But, as Schulz observes, such a "liberated" Hellenistic-Jewish Christian is hardly discernible from a Gentile Christian.[113] Consequently, the thesis presented in the following chapters could be based on either hypothesis, though we think it fits more easily into the theory of a Gentile redactor.

F. *Sitz im Leben* and Form

We pass now to the question of the *Sitz im Leben* and form of Mt's gospel. The *Sitz im Leben* of the gospel has been widely debated. Liturgy, preaching, and the activity of a Christian rabbinic school have all received varying degrees of emphasis from various writers.[114] Some writers have stressed the missionary and apologetic thrust of Mt *ad extra*, especially to the Jews.[115] Others have stressed the *ad intra* influences of liturgy and catechetics. The most balanced position seems to be held by Trilling, who refuses to narrow the *Sitz im Leben* to any one activity of Mt's church.[116] The gospel's *Sitz im Leben* is the total life of the church in all its various activities — *ad intra*: liturgy, fundamental instruction in the faith for both Jewish and Gentile converts, the more advanced education of church leaders in matters of theology and church discipline; *ad extra*: missionary appeals to sympathetic Jews and Gentiles, controversies and scribal debates with Pharisaic Judaism.

The variety of opinions about *Sitz im Leben* has led to a corresponding diversity of views on the form-classification of Mt: e.g., such various classifications as catechism, manual of church order, the new Torah of Jesus in five books, a liturgical lectionary, and finally the untranslatable category of *Kerygma-Geschichtsbuch*.[117] But all these classifications suffer from at least one of two defects: (1) there is no

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[113] Schulz, *Stunde*, 162.

[114] Kilpatrick is, of course, the chief proponent of the liturgical *Sitz im Leben* (cf. *Origins*, 59, 72, 135); cf. also P. Carrington, *The Primitive Christian Calendar* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1952) 31. Sand, *Gesetz*, 13, criticizes Kilpatrick's liturgical emphasis. — Stendahl (*School*, 13-19) criticizes M. Dibelius for his ambiguous notion of *die Predigt* as the *Sitz* of the gospel tradition. Stendahl himself prefers the "school" as the *Sitz*; but see his caveat in the second edition, pp. ix-x. Cf. also F. Filson, "Broken Patterns in the Gospel of Matthew," *JBL* 75 (1956) 227-231, especially 231.

[115] But cf. Stendahl's critique of Davies' attempt to see the Sermon on the Mount as the Christian answer to Jamnia (*School*, xii).

[116] Trilling, *Israel*, 220-221; cf. Strecker, *Weg*, 41, who seems to reflect a similar view when he talks about the "kerygmatic task of the Christian teacher."

[117] For catechism, cf. von Dobschütz, "Matthäus als Rabbi und Katechet"; cf. also Schille, "Bemerkungen"; for church order, see again von Dobschütz's article, p. 344, and cf. W. Thompson, *Matthew's Advice to a Divided Community* (Rome: Pontificio Istituto Biblico, 1970); for the new Torah, cf. B. Bacon, *Studies in Matthew* (N.Y.: Holt & Co., 1930); for the lectionary, cf. references to Kilpatrick in n. 105 of this chapter; for *Kerygma-Geschichtsbuch*, cf. Walker, *Heilsgeschichte*, 149. Frankemölle comes close to Walker's position when he calls Mt a "Buch der Geschichte" (cf. *Jahwebund*, 360-365).

point to asking what the form of a work is if we are going to invent a new form-category for every work; (2) to decide the form of the specifically Matthean material in the work is not to decide the form of the work seen as a whole. Consequently, we prefer to stay with the simple category of "gospel." Gospel, understood as a literary form (of which there are four examples in the canon), is a unique category created by the impact of the unique Christian message. To try to press it into some other category will only mean distorting it. "Gospel" is especially appropriate for Mt and Lk since they quite obviously follow a pre-existent form exemplified at least in Mk.

G. Matthew's Church — A Church in Transition

The question of *Sitz im Leben* can also be seen in a larger perspective, i.e., as regards the place of Mt within the trajectory of the development of the church and Christian thought during the first century A.D. Most of the Matthean critics agree that *transition* is a key concept in the study of Mt. No matter whether we think of Mt's church as already separated from the synagogue or as beginning the process of separation, no matter whether we think of Mt as a Gentile Christian inheriting Jewish-Christian tradition or as a Hellenistic-Jewish Christian growing out of a narrow Jewish-Christian past, Mt's church is molded by its experience of a shift in its Christian existence. A once strongly Jewish-Christian church is becoming increasingly Gentile in composition (cf. Section C). This transition demands a reinterpretation of many of the venerable Jewish-Christian traditions that had been handed down in Mt's church. Mt wishes to affirm, not reject, his Christian past; but he knows that *his* situation is different and that consequently the tradition must be understood in a new light (cf. the possible self-portrait in Mt 13:52; also 9:17). Hence there would arise in Mt's theological endeavor the natural tendency to solve the tension between tradition and redaction by a certain understanding of salvation-history. For what is salvation-history but a schematic understanding of God's dealings with men that emphasizes continuity-yet-difference? Insofar as we see the one and the same God acting faithfully and consistently within the flow of human history, we perceive continuity. Insofar as we see the different ways in which He acts at different times and the different ways in which man responds, we perceive the lines of demarcation that delimit distinct periods of salvation-history. Difference within continuity, the various stages of the one divine economy: this is the basic insight on which any schema of salvation-history is built. It is by constructing such a schema of difference-within-continuity that Mt is able to accept the tradition of his church and insert it into a higher

synthesis.[118] Salvation-history is the key to the higher synthesis which is Mt's gospel.

If there was one element in the Jewish-Christian tradition that was especially difficult for an increasingly Gentile church to absorb into its gospel-message, it was the stringent Law material. Here, more than anywhere else, Mt had to grapple with resistant building blocks. To solve the problem, he reformed stringent statements about the validity and permanence of the Law with redactional additions and provisos. Legal sayings that originally appeared unyielding could thus be fitted into his overarching schema of salvation-history. Here, more than anywhere else, Mt's redactional activity is clear to see. Here, then, more than anywhere else, we can appreciate Mt's theology of salvation-history as a hermeneutical key, the key he uses to preserve yet reinterpret strict Jewish-Christian tradition for his changing community.

But Section G has led us from what we can presuppose to what we must demonstrate in the thesis that follows. Is there a special schema of salvation-history in Mt, and, if so, what is it? What — if any — is the relation of the Law-question in Mt to this schema of salvation-history?[119] Can such a schema shed light upon Mt's redaction of the tradition in 5:17-20 and in the antitheses that follow? These are the main questions we shall try to answer in our thesis, and they determine the basic structure of the thesis. First, we must try to understand the basic outline of salvation-history in Mt. During this attempt at a preliminary understanding of Mt's schema, we will try to keep the precise question of the Law on the sidelines, lest our initial probe be predetermined by the results we would like to find. Chapter II of this thesis forms that initial probe: "Salvation-History in Mt — In

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[118] For continuity-yet-difference in Mt, cf. the fine remarks of Frankemölle, *Jahwebund*, 142, 261. Frankemölle's strange dislike of the label *Heilsgeschichte* and his preference for the word *Geschichtstheologie* seem to arise from too rigid a concept of what salvation-history is. And his great stress on Mt as a creative author obscures the problem of Mt as the faithful ecclesiastical servant of a venerable Jewish-Christian tradition, with the consequent tensions between tradition and redaction (cf. pp. 250-251, n. 18). While we would agree with Frankemölle on the importance of Mt's theology of history, we do not see the evidence that proves Mt formed his theology of history by consciously borrowing from the covenant theology of Dt, the Deuteronomistic historian, and the Chronicler. We feel closer to the view of B. H. Streeter, *The Four Gospels* (London: Macmillan, 1927) 486-487, though we would prefer to speak of a "higher synthesis" rather than Streeter's "careful compromise" (p. 487).

[119] That there would be an *a priori* likelihood that a particular view of history would generate a complementary view of Law is supported by the thesis of D. Rössler, *Gesetz und Geschichte* (Neukirchen: Neukirchener Verlag, 1960). Rössler shows how, in Pharisaic orthodoxy and in the apocalyptic tradition, two different views of the Law were closely connected with two correspondingly different views of history. That Rössler sees the Law as having an historical function within the apocalyptic schema of salvation-history is especially interesting in light of the apocalyptic elements in Mt's portrayal of the death-resurrection of Jesus. On this point, see Chaper II below.

Search of a Starting Point." Then, having constructed a working hypothesis, we will apply it to a key legal passage, Mt 5:17-20. With the help especially of vs. 18 (and, to a lesser degree, of vs. 17), we shall try to verify the initial probe and gain a basic understanding of the Law in Mt. This attempt will form Chapter III, the heart of the thesis: "Mt 5:17-20 — Tradition and Redaction." Finally, having seen how the working hypothesis is verified in this key pericope, we shall seek corroboration of our thesis in 5:21-48, the six antitheses that follow 5:17-20.[120] This will form Chapter IV: "The Antitheses — Confirmation of a Thesis." Chapter V will summarize our conclusions and suggest some further lines of thought. We begin, then, with Chapter II, an attempt to draw a preliminary sketch of salvation-history in Mt.[121]

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[120] As will be seen, Chapter IV will not deal with the entire range of questions surrounding the tradition and redaction of the antitheses — an undertaking that would demand a separate thesis! Chapter IV will touch only those points which immediately concern the position of the Law that results from a study of 5:17-20.

[121] It might be asked why this introductory chapter does not also contain a special *Forschungsgeschichte* on Mt 5:17-20 and the antitheses. There are a number of reasons why such an historical review is not included here. (1) To speak of a *Forschungsgeschichte* presupposes a relatively long history of research in a particular field. But our precise field is the redaction criticism of Mt 5:17-20. Now, redaction criticism itself is a fairly recent branch of criticism. Matthean redaction criticism really blossomed only with the Bornkamm-Barth-Held volume, *Überlieferung und Auslegung*, first published as a single volume in 1960. And even in that groundbreaking volume, only one essay (i.e., G. Barth's) goes into a detailed analysis of 5:17-20 and the antitheses. The other redaction-critical monographs mentioned in our introductory chapter do indeed give some attention to 5:17-20 and the antitheses. But entire monographs dedicated solely to the redaction criticism of 5:17-20 or the antitheses are practically non-existent. (2) We stress the words *redaction criticism* in the last sentence. There certainly have been many monographs and articles on the topic of "Jesus and the Law." Such works often cite 5:17-20, but the verses (or at least some of them) are often judged to be the *ipsissima verba Jesu* without too much examination or qualification. The main thrust of such works is what *Jesus* meant by these logia. Little or no attention is given to the influence of Mt's own composition and theology. For examples, one might examine a classic model of the old liberal psychologizing approach, A. von Harnack's "Hat Jesus das alttestamentliche Gesetz abgeschafft?" in *Aus Wissenschaft und Leben* (Giessen: Töpelmann, 1911) II, 227-236; more recent and more critical (though basically remaining on the level of the *Sitz im Leben Jesu*) are W. Kümmel's "Jesus und die jüdische Traditionsgedanke," *ZNW* 33 (1934) 105-130; and H. Schoeps' "Jésus et la loi juive," *RHPR* 33 (1953) 1-20. A good *Forschungsgeschichte* on different approaches to "Jesus and the Law" is supplied by K. Berger in the introductory section of his *Die Gesetzesauslegung Jesu. Teil I: Markus und Parallelen* (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1972) 3-11. It must be emphasized, then, that for the most part we prescind from the question of the *Sitz im Leben Jesu*. Our point of interest is the Matthean redaction. Whether Mt's theology of the Law (insofar as we are able to ascertain it in this study) coincided with Jesus' theology of the Law, is a question we do not even attempt to answer.

CHAPTER II

Salvation-History in Matthew: in Search of a Starting Point

Introduction

At the end of Chapter I, we stated our belief that Mt tried to solve the problem of preserving yet reinterpreting stringent Jewish-Christian tradition by setting up his own schema of salvation-history. If this be true, a clear understanding of this schema would contribute greatly to grasping the precise place of the Law in Mt's thought. When we notice that such a pivotal verse as 5:18 contains two temporal clauses beginning with *heōs*, we begin to realize how necessary for our work a proper understanding of Mt's conception of salvation-history really is. We hope that the following two chapters will show that salvation-history is a hermeneutical key for unlocking the puzzle of Mt's position on Law. Our first task, then, is to show that Mt possesses his own conception of salvation-history and to determine exactly what that conception is. This is the aim of the present chapter.

The question of salvation-history in Matthew has received a good deal of attention in the last two decades, both in Germany and in the United States. In Germany, it was the great merit of R. Walker that he was one of the first redaction critics to underscore the importance of salvation-history in Mt and to attempt to draw up a complete schema of Mt's conception.[1] Of course, Walker's contribution is not a *creatio*

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[1] R. Walker, *Heilsgeschichte*, especially 111-113. We cannot agree with Walker's schema, which demands a mission to Israel up to A.D. 70, after which the mission to the Gentiles *begins* and the mission to Israel ceases. Walker admits that Mt 28:18-20 stands in tension with this conception, since the mission to the Gentiles here commences immediately after Easter. Walker simply dismisses the problem by saying that Mt did not bother to bring the traditional material in 28:18-20 into harmony with his redactional view of things (p. 113). Yet, Walker himself admits on p. 113 that 28:18-20 shows strong Matthean redaction. In fact, if there is any place in the gospel where Mt clearly expresses his view of the stage of salvation-history which begins with the resurrection, it is Mt 28:18-20. Other passages should be judged from it, and not vice versa. As O. Michel says in "Der Abschluss des Matthäusevangeliums," *EvT* 10 (1950) 21, Mt 28:18-20 is the key to the understanding of the whole gospel. — Firm dissent to recent recognition of salvation-history in Mt has been voiced by K. Fischer, "Redaktionsgeschichtliche Bemerkungen zur Passionsgeschichte des Matthäus," *Theologische Versuche II* (eds. J. Rogge and G. Schille;

ex nihilo. G. Strecker had already pointed out the importance of salvation-history in the "historicizing" view of Mt, who consciously distances himself in time from the "sacred past" of the "life of Jesus."[2] This position of Strecker has not gone without its critics. R. Hummel, seconded to a degree by Stendahl, has objected to an over-historicizing interpretation of Mt that borrows heavily from Conzelmann's view of Lk.[3] In the United States, recent works on salvation-history in Mt include essays by J. Kingsbury[4] and W. Thompson.[5] Kingsbury sees Mt's schema as being divided into the time of Israel and the time of Jesus; there is no independent time of the church.[6] Thompson is more interested in determining the position of Mt's church on the time-line of salvation-history. For Thompson, Mt's church looks back on the mission to Israel as a past event, is presently experiencing opposition from all the nations along with widespread internal dissension, and looks forward to the completion of the universal mission and the coming of the Lord.

We can see, then, that while there has been great interest in Mt's "historical consciousness" in recent years, there is no uniform view on what Mt's schema is and how investigation of that schema should be approached.[7] Consequently, in attempting an initial sketch of Mt's

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Berlin: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 1970) 109-128, and by Frankemölle, who holds that Mt "de-historicizes" (*enthistorisiert*) his tradition (*Jahwebund,* 222). But both Fischer and Frankemölle ignore the elements of development in Mt which we will examine throughout this chapter.

[2] For this thesis of Strecker, see *Weg,* 86-123, and also the convenient summary of his book in his article, "Das Geschichtsverständnis des Matthäus," *EvT* 26 (1966) 57-74. It should be stressed that Strecker does not ignore the other side of the coin. For him, Mt's gospel arises out of a union of the historicizing perspective (earthly Jesus) with the eschatological perspective (risen Lord ruling over his church). See also Trilling, *Israel,* 102-105 and 137-139.

[3] Hummel, *Auseinandersetzung,* 168. But Hummel admits on pp. 168-169 that Mt does have a view of Jesus' earthly life as a "normative past"; Stendahl, *School,* viii n. 3, simply states that he thinks Hummel's question about whether Strecker interprets Mt through Lk is "valid." Conzelmann, in "Present and Future in the Synoptic Tradition," *Journal for Theology and the Church* 5 (1968) 34 n. 34, shows he shares Strecker's basic view: "Matthew and Luke, each in his own way, are the first to envision periods of church history and *Heilsgeschichte.*" Frankemölle, in "Amtskritik im Matthäus-Evangelium?" *Bib* 54 (1973) 247-262, sees the very presence of a large-scale theology of history in Mt as a proof of its late date.

[4] J. Kingsbury, "The Structure of Matthew's Gospel and His Concept of Salvation-History," *CBQ* 35 (1973) 451-474; in agreement with Kingsbury, Schweizer, "Die Kirche des Matthäus," 154 n. 44.

[5] W. Thompson, "An Historical Perspective in the Gospel of Matthew," *JBL* 93 (1974) 243-262.

[6] On the contrary, Fischer remarks correctly in "Redaktionsgeschichtliche Bemerkungen," 109: "Das ganze Evangelium zeigt, das... die Zeit nach Ostern eine Zeit sui generis ist...."

[7] At the CBA Task-Force on Mt of August, 1974, J. Kingsbury pointed out in an oral communication to the present writer that, while we all speak of "salvation-history in Mt," different scholars mean different things by the phrase: a study of time words in Mt, a principle for discovering the literary structure of Mt, a way of

schema for this thesis, it seems wise to start from data that are fairly well agreed upon and progress slowly towards points that are more controversial. But where shall we begin?

A. The Starting Point: The Relation between 10:5-6; 15:24; and 28:16-20

As our point of departure, we shall choose the data found in 10:5-6; 15:24; and 28:16-20 — all three belonging to the special material of Matthew.[8] Mt 10:5-6 and 15:24 are expressions of a very conscious attempt on Mt's part to limit Jesus' public ministry to the territory and the people of Israel. Jesus himself is sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel (15:24) and his missionary charge to his disciples during the Galilean ministry warns them not to go to the Gentiles or Samaritans, but only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel (10:5-6). The repetition of *pros (eis) ta probata ta apolōlota oikou Israēl* in the context of rejecting a wider mission is significant. Here we have two expressions of the same tradition, which may have been crystallized in the milieu of strict Jewish-Christianity during the debates in the early church over a mission to the Gentiles. If this be true, Mt's preservation of this tradition is most instructive for an understanding of the general principle according to which he works Jewish-Christian material into his gospel. The sayings themselves are preserved in all their vigor, not to say harshness. But they are taken up into a higher synthesis of salvation-history where they are typical of only one stage of that history. The same Jesus who, during his earthly ministry, forbids the Twelve a mission among the Gentiles and Samaritans is also the Jesus who, as the exalted Son of Man, commands the Eleven to make disciples of *panta ta ethnē*. Here there is no sloppy, eclectic, or schizophrenic juxtaposition of contradictory material. Rather, Mt quite consciously orders an "economy" of salvation: to the Jews first, and then to the Gentiles. The public ministry of the earthly Jesus stands under geographical and national limitations: the gospel is to be preached only to Israel, and only in the promised land. After the death and resurrection, however, this "economical" limitation falls at Jesus' all-powerful command (Mt 28:16-20). The very same persons (the Twelve/Eleven) who were previously forbidden to evangelize the Gentiles and Samaritans are now solemnly commissioned (by the same person who issued that prohibition) to extend their activities to all the nations. Mt's

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determining the historical situation of Mt's church, a hermeneutical key for understanding Mt's theology (especially his theology of Law). Our goal is definitely the last.

[8] Lange, *Erscheinen*, 251-252, tries to assign 10:5-6 (and 10:23) to Q, but without solid grounds. We omit a treatment of 10:23 (although it contains tradition similar to 10:5-6), because we intend to build our hypothesis on as firm a foundation as possible. The obscurity of 10:23 and the many explanations advanced by exegetes do not recommend the verse as a clear starting point.

intention to set up a schema of salvation-history on the basis of a limited ministry to Israel that is broadened (after the death-resurrection) to all nations can thus serve us as a working hypothesis.[9]

Note, too, that, although the ministry to the Gentiles is reserved in principle to the period after the death-resurrection, Mt does anticipate this ministry in the two cases of the centurion (8:5-13, in which Mt inserts the Q-logion about many coming from east and west to the eschatological banquet) and the Chanaanite woman (15:21-28, which serves paradoxically as the context for 15:24). The pericopes concerning the removal to Capharnaum (4:12-17) and the Gadarene demoniacs (8:28-34) also hint at this wider field for evangelization. Hummel points out that yet another hint of the future call of the Gentiles is the welcome Jesus extends to tax collectors and sinners (cf. the Jewish-Christian equation of Gentile and tax collector in 5:46-47 and 18:17).[10] Thus, the loosening of restrictions that is to take place after the death-resurrection is already suggested and proleptically realized in the limited public ministry. We should keep this in mind, since what is true of the geographical and national limitations might prove true of another kind of limitation as well.

We have then our first firm datum: Mt consciously arranges his data to fit a schema of salvation-history which widens the geographical and national restrictions set on Jesus' public ministry in favor of a universal mission after the death-resurrection. But this datum leads us immediately to a second fact which seems hardly disputable. In the final missionary command of Mt 28:16-20, the author quite obviously sees the universal mission as dispensing with circumcision. Even Bornkamm

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[9] On 10:5-6, cf. Schweizer, *Das Evangelium nach Matthäus*, 152-153; M. Hooker, "Uncomfortable Words X: The Prohibition of Foreign Missions," *ExpT* 82 (1971) 361-365; Hummel, *Auseinandersetzung*, 138-141; G. Baumbach, "Die Mission im Matthäus-Evangelium," *TLZ* 92 (1967) 889-893, especially 893; U. Luck, "Herrenwort und Geschichte in Matth. 28, 16-20," *EvT* 27 (1967) 494-508, especially 498-501. For a different view, see W. Schmithals, *Paul and James* (London: SCM, 1965) 111-113. J. Seynaeve, "Perspectives universalistes dans les évangiles de Matthieu et de Luc," *Revue du clergé africain* 24 (1969) 162-179, is good on the universal perspective in Mt, but perhaps he misses the tension in which the universal perspective stands vis-à-vis the particularistic statements in Mt. The attempt of Frankemölle (*Jahwebund*, 137-138) to deny the pre-Matthean origin of 10:5-6 and 15:24 is not convincing. — Another indication of this schema is the fact that, while Jesus is presented as *teaching* from the very beginning to the very end of his public ministry (4:23; 5:2; 7:29; 9:35; 11:1; 13:54; 21:23; 22:16; 26:55 — especially in redactional summaries!), the disciples are not portrayed as teaching until the great commission (28:20 — *didaskontes*). This is particularly significant when one considers that, in the missionary discourse (ch. 10), Jesus explicitly gives the disciples authority to imitate his ministry in casting out devils, healing, performing other miracles, and even heralding (*kēryssete* — vs. 7). The one element that is eloquent by omission is teaching. Here again, Frankemölle, *Jahwebund*, 106, misses this point, because of his view that there is no real *heilsgeschichtliche* development within Mt's gospel (cf. p. 143).

[10] Hummel, *Auseinandersetzung*, 25.

admits this point.[11] Yet, what does this mean? How can we say that Mt conceives of Jesus as one who gives the Mosaic Law a new interpretation, and that Matthew wishes the church to be faithful to the substance, or even the letter (5:18-19!) of the Mosaic Law, when he portrays the risen Lord as giving a mandate that strikes at the very heart of the Mosaic Law? If the church is going to admit Gentiles as full-fledged disciples of Christ, disciples who are to observe all whatsoever (*panta hosa*, a typical Matthean emphasis) Jesus commanded during his public ministry; and if, nevertheless, the church is to use baptism rather than circumcision as the essential initiation rite for these proselytes, then we cannot honestly speak of either the Matthean Christ or the Matthean church as commanding faithful observance of the Mosaic Law (in its entirety and *qua* Mosaic) in the post-resurrection period. For rabbinic Judaism, a faithful observance of the Mosaic Law that dispensed *in principle* with circumcision was a contradiction in terms.[12]

Putting our two pieces of data together, we get the following Matthean schema. During his public ministry, Jesus restricted himself in principle to the land and people of Israel, though there were a few prophetic exceptions that signified what was to come after the death-resurrection. Correspondingly, during his public ministry, Jesus proclaimed his stringent fidelity to the Mosaic Law (some statements within

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[11] Bornkamm, "Der Auferstandene," 309-311. In a similar vein, cf. Barth, "Das Gesetzesverständnis," 153 — although he puts down Mt's passing over the question of circumcision to his sources. How Barth can then go on to say that Mt emphasizes in an overall way the enduring validity of Law and prophets for the church is not clear; cf. Michel, "Der Abschluss," 25-26. Cf. the pointed remark of J. Sickenberger, "Zwei neue Äusserungen zur Ehebruchklausel bei Mt," *ZNW* 42 (1949) 206.

[12] Note that we say *in principle*. We do not deny that at least some Jews might allow for exceptions in extraordinary cases (e.g., hemophilia, special political pressures). For such cases, cf. N. McEleney, "Conversion, Circumcision, and the Law," *NTS* 20 (1974) 319-341; McEleney thinks that more stringent insistence on circumcision was the result of the demands made by the Pharisees of the late first century A.D. — precisely the time when Mt was written. The suggestion, then, that Mt does not mention circumcision vis-à-vis baptism in 28:16-20 because the practice of circumcision among Christians of his community was taken for granted is highly unlikely. For the gravity of the law of circumcision in normative Judaism, cf. G. F. Moore, *Judaism in the First Centuries of the Christian Era* (N.Y.: Schocken, 1971) I, 198, also 18-20. In I, 331, while discussing the circumcision of a proselyte, Moore quotes a rabbinic adage: "...if a proselyte takes upon himself to obey all the words of the Law except one single commandment, he is not to be received." — H. Gollwitzer, in a comment attached to G. Harder's article, "Jesus und das Gesetz (Matthäus 5, 17-20)," *Abhandlungen zum christlich.-jüdischen Dialog* 2 (Munich: Kaiser, 1967) 205, raises the fundamental question: Just how far could Jesus or anyone else push the "sharpening" of the decalogue and the neglect of the ceremonial law without breaking with Judaism? We might answer that wherever the breaking point lies, dispensing in principle with circumcision in a universal mission to the Gentiles lies on the far side of the break. Cf. the text of the *Sifra* on Leviticus, XXVII, 34, 115d: "No prophet can change a word of the commandments" (our translation from the French one by J. Bonsirven, *Textes rabbiniques des deux prémiers siècles chrétiens* (Rome: Pontificio Istituto Biblico, 1955) 49 (No. 220); a slightly different translation is given by J. Winter, *Sifra. Halachischer Midrash zu Leviticus* (Breslau: Stefan Münz, 1938) 682-683.

5:17-20 fit here), although some of the antitheses and *Streitgespräche* also point forward to what was to come after the death-resurrection.[13] After his death-resurrection, the Lord abolishes those limitations of territory and people which had clung to his public ministry. Correspondingly, his command to make disciples of all nations by baptizing them implicitly rescinds the command of circumcision and so rescinds that fidelity to the Mosaic Law which marked his public ministry. In all this there is a natural, inner logic. A ministry restricted to the land and people of Israel could hardly be carried out otherwise than with fidelity to the Mosaic Law, just as an unrestricted mission to the Gentiles would hardly be conceivable — let alone successful — without the rescinding of such Mosaic prescriptions as circumcision.

B. The Death-Resurrection as *Die Wende der Zeit*

Throughout the first part of this chapter we have taken for granted that it is legitimate to speak of the "death-resurrection" of Christ as basically one event and to treat it as an eschatological turning point.

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[13] The impact of this view on the interpretation of the antitheses and the *Streitgespräche* will be seen in Chapter IV. The idea of anticipation of what is to come in the life of the church after the resurrection has some connection with the distinction between historicity and transparency developed by U. Luz in "Die Jünger im Matthäusevangelium," *ZNW* 62 (1971) 141-171. — Throughout Mt's gospel, one must carefully distinguish two "horizons" or levels of meaning: the sacred past of the earthly Jesus and the present rule of the Son of Man over his church. The meaning of a pericope or a verse can abruptly switch from one level to another. For example, compare the blanket approval of Pharisaic teaching in 23:2-3 with the fierce rejection of Pharisaic teaching on oaths in 23:16-22 and the injunction of Jesus to his disciples not to swear at all in 5:33-37. Ch. 10 begins with the concrete historical situation of the earthly Jesus sending out his disciples on a limited mission (only lost sheep of the house of Israel); yet a number of the verses transcend that horizon and speak of a wider mission proper to the post-resurrection period, lasting up until the second coming (e.g., vss. 18, 22-23). On the question of the two horizons of past and present, cf. Hummel, *Auseinandersetzung*, 16-20 (as regards the Jewish leaders); Schulz, *Stunde*, 217-223 (as regards disciples); H. Green, "The Structure of St Matthew's Gospel," *Studia Evangelica IV* (ed. F. Cross; Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1968) 47-59 (as regards the great discourses); W. Trilling, "Amt und Amtsverständnis bei Matthäus," *Mélanges bibliques* (eds. A. Descamps and A. de Halleux; Gembloux: Duculot, 1970) 29-44, esp. 41; Schweizer, "Die Kirche des Matthäus," 155. The danger of ignoring the two horizons can be seen in F. Beare's claim that Mt lacks critical insight in failing to recognize that some Jewish-Christian material does not fit his own views (in "The Sayings of Jesus in the Gospel According to St. Matthew," *Studia Evangelica IV*, 146-157). Such a critique shows a failure to recognize how Mt subsumes recalcitrant Jewish-Christian material by means of his schema of salvation-history with its two horizons. There is also a danger in so stressing the second horizon of the church's present state that the horizon of the sacred past is forgotten. This is the problem with such articles as Frankemölle, "Amtskritik," 254-257, 261 (likewise with his whole book, *Jahwebund*); and P. Minear, "The Disciples and the Crowds in the Gospel of Matthew," *ATR* Supplementary Series No. 3 (1974) 28-44. For a corrective to Minear's views, see J. Dupont, "Le point de vue de Matthieu dans le chapitre des paraboles," in *L'Evangile selon Matthieu: Rédaction et Théologie* (ed. M. Didier; Gembloux: Duculot, 1972) 221-259, especially 249.

We have claimed that Jesus' death-resurrection means for Mt the passing of the *heilsgeschichtliche* restrictions of Jesus' public ministry, both as to territory and people and as to correlative commands in the Law of Moses. But is this view of Christ's death-resurrection as a single eschatological event (signifying the passing of the old and the breaking-in of the new dispensation) anything more than an over-subtle deduction from Mt's schema — or to be more blunt, anything more than the product of our own theological imagination?

It is our contention that this view of Christ's death-resurrection as *die Wende der Zeit* is firmly grounded in Mt's own depiction of the death-resurrection of Christ, especially in 27:51-54; 28:2-3; and in the appearance of the Son of Man in Mt 28:16-20. We must not think that the redactional changes which Mt makes in his depiction of the death and resurrection of Jesus are merely peripheral to our main concern in this chapter or in this thesis on Law and salvation-history. As M. Kähler pointed out, one may say (with some exaggeration) that the gospels are passion-narratives with extended introductions.[14] Mt, like the other synoptic gospels, must always be seen as a form of paschal proclamation. All Mt's special material, all the theologizing on Law and salvation-history in Mt, must be seen in the light of Mt's unique presentation of the death and resurrection. If Mt 28:16-20 can be called the key to the gospel, how much more is this true of Mt 26-28 as a whole! Of course, a detailed investigation of these three chapters lies beyond the scope of this thesis. But we do think that the passages we have selected (27:51-54; 28:2-3; 28:16-20) contain the clearest statements Mt makes about his own view of the meaning of the death and resurrection of Jesus.

First let us look at 27:51-54. Here, with the full panoply of apocalyptic imagery, Mt portrays the death of Christ as the end of the Old Testament cult, as the earth-shaking beginning of the new aeon (bringing about the resurrection of the dead), and as the moment when the Gentiles first come to full faith in the Son of God. Let us take these three points one by one.[15] (1) Mt 27:51a is taken over almost word-for-word from Mk

[14] M. Kähler, *Der sogenannte historische Jesus und der geschichtliche biblische Christus*[2] (Leipzig: Deichertsche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1896) 80. Cf. Bultmann, *Geschichte*, 396-397.

[15] E. Lohmeyer, *Das Evangelium des Matthäus*[4] (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1967); A. Schlatter, *Der Evangelist Matthäus*[3] (Stuttgart: Calwer, 1948); J. Schniewind, *Das Evangelium nach Matthäus*[12] (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1968). Cf. also, N. Dahl, "Die Passionsgeschichte bei Matthäus," *NTS* 2 (1955-56) 17-32; D. Senior, "The Passion Narrative in the Gospel of Matthew," in *L'Evangile selon Matthieu: Rédaction et Théologie*, 343-357; and A. Descamps, "Rédaction et christologie dans le récit matthéen de la Passion," *L'Evangile selon Matthieu: Rédaction et Théologie*, 359-415; R. Kratz, *Auferweckung als Befreiung. Eine Studie zur Passions- und Auferstehungstheologie des Matthäus* (Stuttgart: KBW, 1973) 15 n. 22, 46-47, and 56; H. Zeller, "Corpora sanctorum. Eine Studie zu Mt 27, 52-53," *ZKT* 71 (1949) 385-465; and J.-M. Widart, "L'unité de la mort et de la résurrection de Jésus chez St Matthieu,"

15:38. The precise meaning of the sign of the temple veil is disputed. Is the sense of the passage that now all have free access to God through the sacrifice of Jesus (cf. the use of *katapetasma* in Heb 6:19; 9:3; 10:20), or that the destruction of the temple in A.D. 70 is seen as a punishment for the death of Christ, or more precisely, that the temple cult will be brought to an end as a result of Christ's death? The problem with symbols is that they are by nature polyvalent, and so perhaps it would be wrong to pick any of these as *the one* meaning. But notice that all of these suggestions involve in one way or another the cessation of the Jerusalem cult as a result of the death of Christ (cf. *eis aphesin hamartiōn* in Mt 26:28). The end of the temple cult was a grievous blow to the pious Jew, who, according to a rabbinic dictum, considered the world to be built on three foundations: "on the Law, on worship, and on deeds of personal kindness." [16] Now one of the props of the old creation was being pulled out, at least in principle, at the death of Christ. (2) Mt 27:51b, not in Mark, is a Matthean addition. The earthquake is a well-known theophanic and apocalyptic motif from the Old Testament, the apocrypha, and rabbinic literature. [17] It symbolizes God's wrathful judgment on the old aeon and his powerful, irresistible intervention to save His people and bring in His rule and kingdom. Note, by the way, the skillfully assembled chain of cause and effect: the earthquake splits the rocks, the splitting of the rocks opens the tombs, the opening of the

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Revue du clergé africain 19 (1964) 37-47. A summary of a dissertation by D. Hutton, *The Resurrection of the Holy Ones*, can be found in *HTR* 63 (1970) 518-519. To the apocalyptic signs mentioned in 27:51-54 we could also add the darkness of vs. 45, which Mt takes over from Mk; Schniewind, *Matthäus*, 270, refers to Amos 8:9 on the darkness of the day of Yahweh. Other OT passages referred to in the commentaries in reference to these apocalyptic signs include Jer 15:9; Ez 37:12 (especially important!); and Dan 12:2. Lohmeyer is quite strong on this point; cf. his *Matthäus*, 395. In a similar vein, cf. Schweizer, *Das Evangelium nach Matthäus*, 337-338. Cf. also H. Bartsch, "Die Passions- und Ostergeschichten bei Matthäus," in *Entmythologisierende Auslegung* (Hamburg-Bergstedt: Evangelischer Verlag, 1962) 80-92 — although we cannot agree with his view that behind Mt's presentation lies an original identification of cross and resurrection with the parousia and that the angel at the tomb was originally the risen Christ; cf. n. 22 of this chapter. Bartsch is criticized well by N. Walter, "Eine vormatthäische Schilderung der Auferstehung Jesu," *NTS* 19 (1972-73) 415-429; but Walter's own reconstruction of the pre-Matthean tradition is equally dubious. More to the point is the remark of W. D. Davies, *The Setting of the Sermon on the Mount* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1966) 85: "The resurrection of the saints ... is here concerned ... with eschatology of the time, which looked forward to a resurrection of the dead in the Messianic Age or Age to Come." Davies also refers to Amos 8:1-9, 10. In the same vein, cf. Jörg Jeremias, *Theophanie* (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1965) 164.

[16] An aphorism of Simeon the Righteous, quoted in Moore, *Judaism* I, 268; it is found in *Pirke Aboth* I, 2.

[17] Cf. Trilling, "Der Tod Jesu, Ende der alten Weltzeit," in *Christusverkündigung in den synoptischen Evangelien* (Munich: Kösel, 1969) 195; also his article, "Die Auferstehung Jesu, Anfang der neuen Weltzeit," in the same volume, 222. For a good survey of background material on earthquakes, cf. Bornkamm, "seiō, seismos," *TDNT* VII (ed. G. Friedrich; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1971) 196-200.

tombs allows the dead to come forth.[18] Mt 27:52-53 is purely Matthean. In bold apocalyptic terms, Mt depicts the resurrection of the dead as taking place proleptically at the death of Christ. The apparently awkward fact that the saints are raised at the death of Christ and yet do not appear in the holy city until after his resurrection (*egersin autou* certainly refers to Christ's own resurrection, at least in Matthew's redaction) has called forth a spate of speculation about the original position and meaning of the pericope.[19] The earthquake has at times been identified with the earthquake in 28:2 (which indeed is an apocalyptic motif there as well), with the result that 27:52-53 has been supposed to have had its original location in the context of Christ's own resurrection. According to this view, when Mt moved the motif of the resurrection of the saints back to the crucifixion, he added the phrase about their not appearing until after *his* resurrection to keep Christ as the "first-fruits of those who have fallen asleep" (1 Cor 15:20; cf. Rom 8:29; Col 1:18).

Even if this speculation about Mt's redactional activity is correct, it does not explain *why* Mt decided to move back the resurrection of the saints to the crucifixion. We would do better to prescind from hypotheses about the pre-redactional state of the tradition and accept the simple datum that, in his own presentation, Mt has quite skillfully woven together the death and resurrection of Christ to make one eschatological event. The proleptic resurrection of the saints is associated with the eschatological event of the crucifixion. Yet both the *idea* of the resurrection of the saints caused by the life-giving death of Christ and the *manner* of its portrayal (accompanied by the apocalyptic motif of the earthquake) tie it together with the resurrection of Christ in Mt 28. We are justified, then, in speaking of the death-resurrection in Mt as one eschatological event.[20] If all these images and themes mean anything, they mean that, in a hitherto unrealized sense, the *basileia* breaks into this age as a result of the death-resurrection of Christ. (3) In 27:54 Mt makes a significant addition to Mk 15:39. Whereas Mk has only the centurion confessing Jesus as Son of God, Mt says that the centurion and those with him who

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[18] Note also the use of the passive voice to indicate God's action; cf. Walker, *Heilsgeschichte*, 72 n. 111; Trilling, "Der Tod Jesu," 195.

[19] Cf. A. M'Neile, *The Gospel According to St. Matthew* (London: Macmillan, 1915) 423-424; Descamps, "Rédaction," 411 n. 104.

[20] Kratz in *Auferweckung als Befreiung*, 15 n. 22, and 56, tries to separate the earthquake in 27:51 from the earthquake in 28:2 (the first is supposed to reflect motifs of theophany and the end-time of apocalyptic, while the second is rather supposed to be a motif from miracles of liberation from prison). But Kratz does not prove his point. The two earthquakes in 27:51 and 28:2 (both Matthean inserts into Markan material) are simply too close together and too much surrounded by other apocalyptic motifs to be separated; cf. Schweizer, "Christus und Gemeinde im Matthäusevangelium," 67. It is questionable whether one can rightly detect the motif of a miracle of liberation from prison in chs. 27 and 28. If it is there at all, it is definitely secondary and subordinate to the main motifs of theophany and apocalyptic *Wende der Zeit*.

were keeping watch over Jesus (*kai hoi met' autou tērountes ton Iēsoun*) confess that "truly this [omitting Mk's "man"] was God's Son" (*alēthōs theou huios ēn houtos*). Again, while in Mk the centurion is moved to this confession by seeing the way Jesus died, in Mt the centurion and those with him see the earthquake and the subsequent phenomena (*ta genomena*) and are seized with fear in the face of the holy (*ephobēthēsan*). The Gentiles' experience of the apocalyptic signs accompanying the eschatological event of Jesus' death leads them to the Easter confession of Jesus as Son of God.[21] Here we have a proleptic realization of the goal of the risen Lord's missionary mandate in 28:16-20: the Gentiles have become disciples (cf. 14:33 for the same confession in the mouth of disciples: *alēthōs theou huios ei*).

As we have already mentioned, the Matthean insert in 28:2-3 extends the apocalyptic imagery to the resurrection.[22] The task of clothing the resurrection with apocalyptic events may have caused Mt some difficulty. Early tradition forbade a description of the resurrection itself, and even most of the appearance stories in the gospels lack any truly apocalyptic color. Mt solves the problem by associating the apocalyptic theme with the angel — an element in the tradition that readily lent itself to apocalyptic interpretation. An "angel of the Lord" (not the young man of Mk) is introduced by a great earthquake. He is not sitting or standing by the tomb to begin with, but descends from the heavenly sphere to deliver his revelation. The angel is specifically mentioned as performing the mighty feat of rolling back the sealed rock. The description of the angel (con-

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[21] Walker, *Heilsgeschichte*, 72; cf. T. DeKruijf, *Der Sohn des lebendigen Gottes* (Rome: Pontificio Istituto Biblico, 1962) 103-104.

[22] Obviously, space does not allow a full treatment of all the questions raised by Mt 28 and the resurrection narratives in general. For standard treatments and bibliographies, see H. von Campenhausen, *Der Ablauf der Osterereignisse und das leere Grab*[3] (Heidelberg: Carl Winter Universitätsverlag, 1966); H. Grass, *Ostergeschehen und Osterberichte*[4] (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1970); K. Rengstorf, *Die Auferstehung Jesu*[5] (Witten: Luther Verlag, 1967); *The Significance of the Message of the Resurrection for Faith in Jesus Christ* (ed. C. Moule; London: SCM, 1968); W. Marxsen, *The Resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth* (London: SCM, 1970); P. Seidensticker, *Die Auferstehung Jesu in der Botschaft der Evangelisten*[2] (Stuttgart: KBW, 1968); L. Schenke, *Auferstehungsverkündigung und leeres Grab*[2] (Stuttgart: KBW, 1969); P. de Surgy *et al.*, *La résurrection du Christ et l'exégèse moderne* (Paris: Cerf, 1969); J. Kremer, *Die Osterbotschaft der vier Evangelien*[3] (Stuttgart: KBW, 1969); P. Benoit, *The Passion and Resurrection of Jesus Christ* (N.Y.: Herder & Herder, 1969); C. Evans, *Resurrection and the New Testament* (London: SCM, 1970); E. Bode, *The First Easter Morning* (Rome: Pontificio Istituto Biblico, 1970); G. Kegel, *Auferstehung Jesu — Auferstehung der Toten* (Gütersloh: Mohn, 1970); R. Fuller, *The Formation of the Resurrection Narrative* (N.Y.: Macmillan, 1971); X. Léon-Dufour, *Resurrection and the Message of Easter* (London: Chapman, 1974). Note that we do not go into the question — raised by a number of the books and articles mentioned above — of the relation between Mt 28:2-4 and the Gospel of Peter 34-42. Since the Gospel of Peter (written around the middle of the second century A.D.) is clearly later than Mt, and since the tendency of the tradition seems to be from Angelophany to Christophany, we do not think that the Gospel of Peter represents an early tradition lying behind Mt's account.

firming him as an apocalyptic stock figure) is vaguely reminiscent of the description of Jesus at the Transfiguration (Mt 17:2; cf. also Dan 7:9; Apoc 1:14-16; Apoc 10:1). The guards (*hoi tērountes*) experience fear (*phobos*) as the guards had at the cross (*hoi met' autou tērountes ... ephobēthēsan*) because of the apocalyptic portents. But there is a great difference: in 28:4 the guards are shaken (*seiō* again) with fear and become as dead men, while in 27:51-53 the earth is shaken and the dead are raised. Note, too, that in 28:5, 8, the women are also said to be seized with fear before the holy (*phobeomai* and *phobos*).[23] Our conclusion, then, is that Mt has carefully clothed the death and the resurrection of Jesus with verbal and thematic parallels taken from apocalyptic literature. Especially the apocalyptic motifs of earthquake and resurrection of the dead tie the two events together into the one great inauguration of the new aeon, the death-resurrection.

C. A Second Look at 28:16-20 — "Proleptic Parousia?"

The consideration of 27:51-54 and 28:2-3 brings us back to the conclusion of the gospel for a second look.[24] Does 28:16-20 contain any confirmation of our view that Mt sees the death-resurrection as the great apocalyptic event ushering in the new age? We think so. In 28:16-20, the appearance of Jesus is only the introduction to the main point of the pericope, namely the Risen One's three-point declaration of his own enthronement (18b), of his missionary charge to the Eleven (19-20a), and of his constant presence in the church (20b). The three parts, though not a full-blown enthronement hymn, have traces of this literary form — though the influence of other forms can also be detected.[25] The first

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[23] Cf. H. Balz, "phobeō," *TDNT* IX, 209. For a study of all the antitheses and ironies in Mt's portrayal of the death-resurrection, cf. F. Neirynck, "Les femmes au tombeau: étude de la rédaction matthéenne," *NTS* 15 (1968-69) 168-190.

[24] For an exhaustive treatment of 28:16-20, see Lange, *Erscheinen,* which is dedicated entirely to this pericope. A full bibliography on the subject can be found at the end of the volume. Against Vögtle, Lange does see a reference to Dan 7:14 in Mt 28:16-20 (cf. p. 216). For opinions pro and con, cf. p. 212 n. 1. Lange fails to see that Mt 28:16-20 says something more than 11:27, which must be understood within the place Mt assigns it in his schema of salvation-history and Jesus' public ministry (as opposed to its supposed location and meaning in Q).

[25] Cf. Trilling, *Israel,* 46, and the literature by O. Michel and Joachim Jeremias cited there. The many various opinions on patterns, schemas, and forms in 28:16-20 are summarized by Frankemölle, *Jahwebund,* 46-67. His own view is a bit confused, since he wishes to see in the pericope *both* the *Manifest*-pattern of 2 Chr 36:23 (suggested by B. Malina, "The Literary Structure and Form of Matt. XXVIII. 16-20," *NTS* 17 [1970] 87-103), *and* the (admittedly modified) covenant formula isolated by K. Baltzer. As with his general view of Mt's theology of history (based on the Deuteronomistic vision of Israel's history), so with Mt 28:16-20, Frankemölle seems to press isolated allusions and partial parallels too far. — Lange, *Erscheinen,* 349-354, rejects the enthronement-hymn pattern, is non-committal on the pattern of *OT Gottesrede,* and favors Malina's official decree pattern as seen in 2 Chr 36. But, as can be seen from Lange's presentation, Mt 28:16-20 does not perfectly fit the official decree

part presents the risen Lord in a way reminiscent of the eschatological Son of Man in Dan 7:14. C. H. Dodd even referred to Mt's scene in 28:16-20 as a "proleptic parousia."[26] A. Vögtle has objected to this term, and has questioned the influence of Dan 7 on our text.[27] Vögtle's arguments, however, do not seem very convincing. (1) Vögtle points out that Mt 28:18 is, from a linguistic point of view, not notably similar to Dan 7:13-14. Yet his argument, strangely enough, is based on the Theodotion text of Dan. The LXX text, much closer to Mt's formulation, will not support Vögtle's thesis.[28] (2) The perspective in Dan is totally different

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pattern any more than it perfectly fits the pattern of enthronement hymn. The whole pericope, in its present state, is so much the product of Mt's redactional activity, so *sui generis*, that a form-critical category (dealing with the *typical*) can hardly be assigned to it. (Note, by the way, how many critics try to simplify the thorny problem by restricting the question of *Gattung* to vss. 18-20.) On the other hand, we think that Lange goes too far when he claims that 28:16-20 is a redactional creation of Mt (*Erscheinen*, 150 n. 5).

[26] C. H. Dodd, "Matthew and Paul," in *New Testament Studies* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1967) 56; he himself borrows the phrase from R. H. Lightfoot. Barth, "Gesetzesverständnis," 125, also states that the reference is to Dan 7:14. Bartsch, in "Die Passions- und Ostergeschichte bei Matthäus," 81, speaks of 28:16-20 as "eine Epiphanie des Menschensohnes." But some scholars have objected to Dodd's phrase "proleptic parousia" as not in keeping with Mt's use of *parousia*. In what follows, we defend the reference to Dan in Mt 28:18, the view of Christ's death-resurrection as the breaking-in of the *basileia*, and the presence of a goodly amount of realized eschatology in Mt. On all this, cf. J. Radermakers, *Au fil de l'évangile selon saint Matthieu* II (Heverlee-Louvain: Institut d'Etudes théologiques, 1972) 22; Schweizer, *Evangelium nach Matthäus*, 346-348; and E. Haenchen, "Matthäus 23," 38; Luck, "Herrenwort," 502-503. Lange, *Erscheinen*, 210, is willing to allow the phrase, but with qualifications (to save the importance of 11:27). Our basic positions, and the data that support them, are much more important than a quarrel over the phrase "proleptic parousia."

[27] A. Vögtle, "Das christologische und ekklesiologische Anliegen von Mt. 28, 18-20," in *Studia Evangelica II*, 266-294, especially 268 for the objection against Dodd's judgment. We cannot agree with his argument on p. 267: "Würde Mt 28, 18ff. im Verständnis des Evangelisten nun die Erfüllung von Dan 7:14 proklamieren, so müsste Dan 7:13 als bereits erfüllt gelten oder aber als bedeutungslos ausser Acht bleiben. Keine dieser beiden Möglichkeiten lässt sich mit Mt. befriedigend vereinbar. Nach erfolgter Erfüllung von 7:14 könnte das Kommen des Menschensohnes auf den Himmelwolken, als gewissermassen nachzuholende Erfüllung eines der Intronisation vorausgehende Aktes (vs. 13), sinnervollerweise nicht mehr erwartet werden." *A priori*, this either-or approach leaves no room for Mt's use of Dan 7:13-14 in a new, creative way, adapted to Mt's own theology; cf. Lange, *Erscheinen*, 212-217, for a good refutation of Vögtle's arguments. Of course, even for Mt the full manifestation of the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven is reserved to the *synteleia* (13:39; 28:20). But those who through faith live even now the eschatological existence made possible by Jesus' death-resurrection already see in faith the enthroned Son of Man invested with all power. In this regard, notice how the eschatological statement of Mk 14:62 is reinterpreted by Mt 26:64 to refer to the presently reigning Son of Man: Mt inserts *ap' arti* just before *opsesthe ton huion tou anthrōpou kathēmenon... kai erchomenon;* Lange, *Erscheinen*, 234-235, fails to see the point here. Cf. Descamps, "Rédaction," 409-410; L. Hartman, "Scriptural Exegesis in the Gospel of St. Matthew and the Problem of Communication," *L'Evangile selon Matthieu: Rédaction et Théologie*, 131-152, especially 143-145; also Frankemölle, *Jahwebund*, 61-67.

[28] Curiously, Trilling, *Israel*, 22 n. 5, notes the difference between Theodotion and the LXX, admits the LXX's *exousia* instead of *basileia* is in Mt, but nevertheless follows Vögtle's general argument. Vögtle's views have influenced a large number

from that of Mt, says Vögtle. In Dan, after the destruction of the evil kingdoms of this world, the Son of Man comes on the clouds of heaven to usher in the reign of the end-time. Yet, precisely on the basis of the considerations presented in this chapter, Mt's adaptation of this eschatological image to the risen Lord seems perfectly consonant with the general structure of Matthean theology: the powers of sin and death have been destroyed, at least proleptically, at least in principle, by the death-resurrection of Jesus. The risen Lord apprears as the one to whom *pasa exousia* was given (*edothē*) in heaven and on earth, who therefore can command a universal mission to the Gentiles that prescinds from circumcision, and who can promise his abiding presence (like the Shekinah) to the church (cf. 1:23 and 18:20). Of course, Vögtle is correct in seeing that Mt's use of *exousia* during the public ministry as well as Mt 11:27 influence the conclusion of the gospel. But we should object to a complete paralleling of 11:27 and 28:18, since the themes of the two pericopes differ (revelation of apocalyptic secrets by "the Son" *versus* the royal power of the enthroned Son of Man).[29] And one might also ask whether it is a mere accident that the noun *exousia* and the adjective *pas*, used separately in reference to Jesus during the public ministry, are now united in one phrase to describe the risen Lord. The earthly Jesus, to whom all revealed knowledge (*panta*) was given, did indeed exercise *exousia* during his earthly ministry; but to the risen Lord *pasa exousia* has been given. The death-resurrection has brought in a new era of realized eschatology.[30]

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of authors; cf., e.g., J. Gnilka, "Der Missionsauftrag des Herrn nach Mt 28 und Apg 1," *B Leb* 9 (1968) 1-9, especially 1 n. 1; but Frankemölle, *Jahwebund*, 61-67, correctly criticizes Vögtle on this point. — An examination of Mt's OT-citation texts shows that the gospel is familiar with both Greek versions of Dan (cf. R. Gundry, *The Use of the OT in St. Matthew's Gospel*). H. Green, "The Command to Baptize and Other Matthean Interpolations," *Studia Evangelica IV*, 62, even speaks of Dan 7:14 as the text "which Lohmeyer rightly notes as the principal O.T. background text for Mt 28, 18-20." For the importance of the book of Dan (and notably ch. 2) for Mt in general, cf. Kretzer, *Herrschaft*, 23 n. 17, and 33.

[29] So Schmid, *Evangelium nach Matthäus*, 198-199; but for a different view on *pasa exousia*, cf. C. Carlston, "The Things that Defile (Mark vii.14) and the Law in Matthew and Mark," *NTS* 15 (1968-69) 84. Lange, *Erscheinen*, 155-157, 163, and throughout his book, creates too strict a parallel between Mt 11:27 and 28:16-20; he also restricts too severely Mt's idea of *exousia* and fails to see the important difference in *pasa exousia* (cf. 45, 150-170, 177).

[30] Cf. Trilling, *Israel*, 50. Cf. also E. Käsemann, "The Beginnings of Christian Theology," in *Journal for Theology and the Church* 6 (1969) 30. — On the other hand, H. Conzelmann, "Present and Future in the Synoptic Tradition," in *Journal for Theology and the Church* 5 (1968) 38, sees — incorrectly, we think — a reintensification of the expectation of an imminent parousia in Mt. J. Lambrecht, "The Parousia Discourse. Composition and Content in Mt., XXIV-XXV," in *L'Evangile selon Matthieu: Rédaction et Théologie*, 309-342, also holds that Matthew thinks the parousia is near. But, despite Lambrecht's statements on p. 329, Mt 24:48 and 25:5, 19 make this view untenable. See rather G. Bornkamm, "Die Verzögerung der Parusie," in *Geschichte und Glaube I* (Munich: Kaiser, 1968) 46-55; K. Donfried, "The Allegory of the Ten Virgins (Matt 25:1-13) as a Summary of Matthean Theology," *JBL* 93 (1974) 415-428

Our examination of 27:51-54; 28:2-3; and 28:16-20 has confirmed our hypothesis that Mt sees the death-resurrection as an eschatological event in which the Kingdom breaks into this aeon in a new, fuller way.[31] Mt has "apocalypticized" the basic kerygma of Jesus' death and resurrection. This explains why the limitations of territory, nation, and Mosaic Law should be observed during the public ministry of Jesus, while all these restrictions fall away after the death-resurrection, after the enthronement of the Son of Man (which is not coterminous with the complete ending of the old aeon).[32] These restrictions belonged to the old economy, the old aeon, and have been transcended for the believing disciple. This basic concept of Mt must be kept in mind when we examine Mt's statements on the Law, particularly Mt's redaction of 5:17-20, with the antitheses that follow. The Law in Mt must be understood within Mt's schema of salvation-history, and the turning point of salvation-history for Mt is Jesus' death-resurrection, presented in apocalyptic terms.

But a final note of caution. We have argued in this chapter that there is much more "realized eschatology" in Mt's theology than is usually admitted. This is not to say that Mt is another John.[33] While Mt may

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(though the latter article seems to push the element of allegory too far); and E. Schweizer, "Matthäus 21-25," in *Orientierung an Jesus* (ed. P. Hoffmann; Freiburg: Herder, 1973), 364-371, especially 370.

[31] We do not deny that, for Mt, the Kingdom is present in some sense in the person of Jesus from the beginning (cf. 1:23; 2:2; 4:17). Indeed, for Mt, the Kingdom of God already existed in some sense in OT Israel (21:43, a Matthean insertion into the Markan parable). But the death-resurrection is most certainly a new, decisive breaking in of the Kingdom in power, as the *démarche* of 28:16-20 shows.

[32] Hence, we cannot agree entirely with G. Barth, "Gesetzesverständnis," 138: "Daher ist es für Matthäus undenkbar, dass mit Jesu Tod das Gesetz abgeschafft sein solle, auch wenn er in Jesu Leben und Sterben das *plērōsai pasan dikaiosynēn* sieht (und zwar an Stelle der Sünder! 3, 15)." On this point Trilling's position does not seem to be wholly consistent. In *Israel*, 186, he says: "Matthäus scheint mit der Gesetzesfrage kein christologisches Problem im engeren Sinn zu verbinden (Christus des Gesetzes Ende), so dass Tod und Auferstehung Jesu in dieser Hinsicht eine neue Situation geschaffen hätten." Yet his two essays, "Der Tod Jesu, Ende der alten Weltzeit," and "Die Auferstehung Jesu, Anfang der neuen Weltzeit," while not touching especially the question of Law, emphasize precisely the turning of the aeon at the death-resurrection. Are we to suppose that for Trilling this turning of the aeon has no impact on the situation of the Law? His popular commentary on Mt says just the opposite; cf. Trilling, *Das Evangelium nach Matthäus*[4] (Düsseldorf: Patmos, 1970) I, 110-111 (English translation: *The Gospel According to St. Matthew* [London: Burns and Oates, 1969] I, 79-80). — According to U. Luck, *Die Vollkommenheitsforderung der Bergpredigt* (Munich: Kaiser, 1968) 54-55, the exalted Lord of Mt "überwindet 'vor der Zeit,' dh vor dem offenkundigen Hereinbrechen der Gottesherrschaft die Mächte dieses Äons...."

[33] On the other hand, more attention should be given to the similar views that can be found in Mt and Jn; cf. Lange, *Erscheinen*, 380 n. 66. Trilling, *Israel*, 190 and 213, mentions two points of similarity between Mt and Jn: the reworking of a story to stress the interpreting word, and the free reworking of material, without too much concern for historical tradition, in order to make the material more fruitful for the life of the church. This may be why these two gospels proved to be especially important in the life of the later church. — Actually, it is not particularly strange that there should be similarities in thought between Mt and Jn. It may

indeed be moving toward John's position, he certainly has not arrived there. Mt 28:20b should be enough to warn us against an exaggerated position. Mt still awaits the *synteleia tou aiōnos* (a phrase which, in this precise form, is peculiar to Mt in the NT). The breaking-in of the Kingdom has put an end to the old aeon in principle, but not in full-blown reality. The old age continues, the world is a *corpus mixtum* in which the devil as well as the Son of Man can plant seed (Mt 13:36-43).[34] The final, visible separation that destroys the old age once and for all still lies in the future, since the harvest is expressly said to be the *synteleia aiōnos* (vs. 39, repeated in vs. 40).[35] But as most exegetes admit, the expectation of the imminent parousia has receded in Mt, so that the em-

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well be that both gospels were edited in their final form by Gentile Christians not too far removed in time and place. Cf. Stendahl, "Quis et Unde?" in *Judentum, Urchristentum, Kirche* (Berlin: Töpelmann, 1960) 104 n. 44. On contacts between Mt and Jn in the passion and resurrection narratives, cf. Benoit, "Marie-Madeleine et les disciples au tombeau selon Joh 20,1-18," in *Judentum, Urchristentum, Kirche,* 145 n. 15; also, Fischer, "Redaktionsgeschichtliche Bemerkungen," 109-128, especially 122-123; and Dahl, "Passionsgeschichte," 21-22, 32. Rothfuchs, *Erfüllungszitate,* 151-177, gives a detailed comparison between Matthean and Johannine "formulas of fulfillment." The growing appreciation of the "high Christology" present in Mt may also produce some surprising comparisons with Jn. Kingsbury will soon be publishing a book on Matthean Christology; a preview of his thought on "Son of God" can be had in his article, "The Title 'Son of God' in Matthew's Gospel," *Biblical Theology Bulletin* 5 (1975) 3-31: Kingsbury sees "Son of God" as the key Matthean title, dominating even Mt 28:16-20. In contrast, Lange stresses the importance of "Son of Man" in Mt. But he pushes his point too far when he tries to subsume other important titles (e.g., "Son of God," "Lord") under "Son of Man"; cf. his *Erscheinen,* 88-89, 128-130, 183. Perhaps Kingsbury errs in the opposite direction, tending to play down "Son of Man" in favor of "Son of God."

[34] Despite affirmations that the church is the *corpus mixtum* referred to in the explanation of the parable, vs. 38 states that the field is the world; so the world seems to be the Kingdom of the Son of Man in vs. 41. On this point, cf. Kretzer, *Herrschaft,* 139, and Dupont, "Le point de vue de Matthieu dans le chapitre des paraboles," in *L'Evangile selon Matthieu: Rédaction et Théologie,* 229. An interesting consequence from all this is that the world is the reality designated as the Kingdom of the Son of Man in 13:41. Now Mt hardly conceives the earthly Jesus as the Son of Man already ruling over the whole universe as King. Rather, this is the state of affairs brought about by the death-resurrection. The correct understanding of the Kingdom in vs. 41 is missed by W. Walker, "The Kingdom of the Son of Man and the Kingdom of the Father in Matthew," *CBQ* 30 (1968) 573-579. For some pertinent comments on the future-yet-present *basileia* in Mt, cf. N. Walter, "Die Bearbeitung der Seligpreisungen durch Matthäus," *Studia Evangelica IV,* 257-258.

[35] Another reason why the establishment of the Kingdom cannot be identified with the cross and resurrection *simpliciter* is that Mt sees the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70 as also part of the eschatological drama; cf. the two articles of A. Feuillet, "Le discours de Jésus sur la ruine du temple," *RB* 56 (1949) 61-92, and "La synthèse eschatologique de saint Matthieu," *RB* 56 (1949) 340-364. But Feuillet also recognizes that everything is already present in principle in the death and resurrection of Christ; similarly, Hare, *Theme,* 155. While Mt sees the destruction of Jerusalem in eschatological colors, it is certainly not for him the *synteleia tou aiōnos;* cf. R. Walker, *Heilsgeschichte,* 58-59; Hare, *Theme,* 163. — The eschatological turning of the ages and the coming of the Son of Man *to* his church, to remain with it all the days of its universal mission, open up a new stage of salvation-history, which we might call "the time of the church." But we must be careful to distinguish this from Lk's "time of the church," which is conceived differently.

phasis in 28:20 is on the abiding presence of the enthroned Lord *pasas tas hēmeras,* rather than on the *synteleia tou aiōnos.* There is not even a Lukan ascension on the clouds with a promise that Jesus will come again in the same way. Lk's gospel ends with Jesus' going away from the apostles (Lk 24:50-53). Mt's gospel ends with Jesus' coming to (*proselthōn* in 28:18!) his disciples, to remain with them. Yet, despite the fact that Mt is not concerned with an imminent parousia, Christian existence is for him no less basically conditioned by the eschatological event than it was for the earliest Christians. In fact, for Mt the present existence of the Christian is eschatologically conditioned in two ways. (1) The death-resurrection as eschatological event has thrown down the limitations of territory, nation, and Mosaic Law that belonged to the old aeon.[36] The Christian lives even now by the power of the Kingdom, while he awaits the definitive passing of this age. (2) But the passing of the old age does indeed remain in the future, and with it the eschatological judgment of the Son of Man. The Christians of Mt's church do not differ in this regard from the first Christians: expectation of the end does give an eschatological quality to present existence. The difference lies in the fact that, for Mt, the stringency of judgment has taken the place of the temporal imminence of judgment as the great motive in parenesis.

We conclude, then, that Mt has very consciously and carefully drawn up a schema of salvation-history. As we might expect in the literary form "gospel" (extended paschal proclamation), the "center of gravity" in this schema is placed at the death-resurrection. The great turning point in the schema is the death-resurrection seen as apocalyptic event, the definitive breaking-in of the new aeon. Such a schema allows Mt to preserve stringent Jewish-Christian statements (e.g., 10:5-6; 15:24) by referring them to the time before the turning point, the time of the restricted ministry to the land and people of Israel. As 28:16-20 shows, after the turning point such restrictions fall in favor of a universal mission free of circumcision. What we must now ask is whether this schema, whether this way of expressing the paschal proclamation, sheds light on the general problem of Law in Mt, on the particular problem of 5:17-20, and most especially on the *crux interpretum* of 5:18.

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[36] Davies, in his intriguing essay, "Matthew, 5, 17-18," in *Mélanges A. Robert* (Paris: Bloud et Gay, 1957) 428-456, has attempted an interpretation of the troublesome passage 5:17-18 in the light of Christ's death and resurrection seen as the eschatological event. While we will be drawing upon some of Davies' insights when we take up 5:18 in Chapter III, one basic difference should be noted from the start. Davies is concerned with the intention of the historical Jesus, who, according to Davies, was aware that he was the Messiah in the sense of the suffering servant of Yahweh. As we have already pointed out at the end of Chapter I, we do not intend to enter into the complicated question of what the historical Jesus meant by 5:17-20, if these verses are authentic. We think it is better methodologically to begin from the firm data of Mt's redaction and to move first to a judgment of what Mt himself meant by 5:17-20. This is a more modest goal, but perhaps the results will be more verifiable. For an interesting treatment of the relation of Mt's eschatology to the Law-question, especially 5:17-18, see O. Hanssen's "Zum Verständnis der Bergpredigt," in *Der Ruf Jesu und die Antwort der Gemeinde* (ed. E. Lohse; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1970) 94-111.

CHAPTER III

Matthew 5:17-20 — Tradition and Redaction

Introduction

Having seen, in a global manner, the sources, circumstances, and problems that gave rise to the gospel of Mt (Chapter I), and having sketched a preliminary outline of salvation-history in Mt (Chapter II), we can now proceed to an examination of our key pericope, 5:17-20. But first, we should say a word about the place and function of our pericope within the whole gospel.

Mt 5:17-20 is situated within the Sermon on the Mount, the first of the five great discourses of the gospel (Sermon on the Mount, 5:1 - 7:27; Missionary Charge to the Twelve, 10:5-42; Parables-Discourse, 13:3-52; Instructions to the Community, 18:3-35; Eschatological Discourse, 24:4 - 25:46). These five great discourses serve as the main pillars holding up the architectonic structure of Mt.[1] Section 5:17-20 thus gains immediate importance from its position in the whole gospel. Preceding all the *Streitgespräche* and other "legal" material as it does, it is the first statement of Jesus concerning the Mosaic Law. Nowhere in the rest of Mt do we find a programmatic statement on the Law that equals these four verses in concentration, density, and difficulty.

Mt 5:17-20 also has an important place within the Sermon on the Mount.[2] The Sermon opens with nine beatitudes (4+4+1 in the Mat-

[1] To admit the structural importance of the five great discourses is not necessarily to adopt any theory about Mt's being divided into five books reflecting the five books of the Pentateuch (concerning which, cf., e.g., B. Bacon, *Studies in Matthew* [N.Y.: Holt, 1930]). Nor does an admission of the structural importance of the five great discourses necessarily relegate chs. 1-2 and chs. 26-28 to a position of prologue and appendix. The whole question of literary structure in Mt (a question that does not directly concern our thesis) is treated quite well by J. Comber in "Reflections on the Structure of Matthew's Gospel," a paper delivered at the CBA Task-Force on Matthew, August, 1973; cf. also Neirynck, "La rédaction matthéenne et la structure du premier évangile," *ETL* 43 (1967) 41-73.

[2] For detailed treatments of the Sermon on the Mount, see especially Davies, *Setting;* G. Miegge, *Il sermone sul monte* (Torino: Editrice Claudiana, 1970); and now the completed trilogy of J. Dupont, *Les Béatitudes* (I: *Le problème littéraire,* Paris: Gabalda, 1969; II: *La bonne nouvelle,* 1969; III: *Les Evangélistes,* 1973). These volumes largely supersede such earlier works as P. Fiebig, *Jesu Bergpredigt* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1924); H. Windisch, *Der Sinn der Bergpredigt*[2] (Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1937); and T. Soiron, *Die Bergpredigt Jesu* (Herder: Freiburg, 1941).

thean redaction). While the beatitudes were originally prophetic cries of comfort and promise directed to the afflicted, Mt has infused into them his own moral parenesis on Christian attitudes and conduct. This note of both promise and exhortation is continued — with an undertone of warning — in the transitional section, 5:13-16 (the two parables on salt and light). Coming from 5:13-16, we sense a definite break at vs. 17. The tone changes to one of firm warning (*mē nomisēte*), and the four verses of 5:17-20 speak of a new, hitherto untouched topic: Mosaic Law (vs. 17: relation of the Law to Jesus; vs. 18: perdurance of the Law in its smallest parts; vs. 19: fidelity to teaching the Law in its smallest parts; vs. 20: moral conduct of the disciples, which must exceed that of the Law-abiding scribes and Pharisees). This programmatic statement on the Law is then illustrated by six antitheses (5:21-48), which are introduced by 5:20 (and, in a broader sense, by the whole of 5:17-20). Mt 5:20 thus serves as a type of "bridge" or transition between the statement of principle (5:17-19) and the applications or illustrations (5:21-48).[3] Vs. 5:20 both sums up what has preceded and inaugurates what follows.

All this gives us some idea of the pivotal nature of 5:17-20 within ch. 5, within the Sermon on the Mount,[4] and within the whole framework of Mt's theology of the Law. We would venture to say that no other pericope of comparable length in Mt is of such central importance for understanding Mt's stance vis-à-vis the Law, and that no other pericope of comparable length is so difficult to understand.[5] Consequently, one can readily see the vital contribution which a correct understanding of 5:17-20 can make to a better comprehension of Mt's theology, especially his

[3] D. Daube, "Three Questions of Form in Matthew V," *JTS* 45 (1944) 21-31, especially 24-27, notes that 5:17-20 and 5:21-48 may reflect the rabbinic pattern of principle and illustrations, although he does not deny that Greek literature also knew the pattern. On the structure and function of 5:17-20 in its context, cf. Sand, "Die Polemik gegen 'Gesetzlosigkeit' im Evangelium nach Matthäus und bei Paulus," *BZ* 14 (1970) 112-125, especially 116; J. Kürzinger, "Zur Komposition der Bergpredigt nach Matthäus," *Bib* 40 (1959) 569-589 (but Kürzinger's attempt to make 5:17 introduce 5:21-48 while 5:20 introduces ch. 6 cannot be considered successful).

[4] As regards the structural importance of 5:17, it is often claimed that 5:17 forms an inclusion with 7:12, because of the repetition of the phrase, "the Law and the prophets"; so, following many others, Rothfuchs, *Erfüllungszitate*, 111; McConnell, *Law and Prophecy*, 11-12; Grundmann, *Das Evangelium nach Matthäus*, 141-142. But this is questionable. (1) Admitting such an inclusion means relegating 5:3-16 and 7:13-27 to the positions of prologue and epilogue respectively. The importance of the material in those two sections does not recommend such a demotion. (2) If there be an inclusion, it is no more than a verbal technique, since 7:12 can in no way be considered a summation of all the material in the body of the Sermon, especially in ch. 6, which lays such stress on duties towards God (not neighbor). — We might note in passing that the "golden rule" of 7:12 is an expression of popular (not to say mediocre) morality which hardly deserves to be put on the level of the love commandment which Mt stresses in 5:43-48, 19:19, and 22:34-40 (again, the Law and the prophets); one should not call 7:12 the "Summe der ganzen Bergpredigt" (Sand, *Gesetz*, 187 [quoting Holtzmann]).

[5] Cf. A. Feuillet, "Morale ancienne et morale chrétienne d'après Mt. V. 17-20; comparaison avec la doctrine de l'épître aux Romains," *NTS* 17 (1971) 123-137, especially 123.

theology of the Law. Our study takes on a particular relevance when we realize that the proper understanding of the Law in Mt's theology is one of the most vexed problems in Matthean studies today. In the trail-blazing collection, *Überlieferung und Auslegung im Matthäusevangelium,* perhaps the most ambitious yet most unsatisfying essay is G. Barth's "Das Gesetzesverständnis des Evangelisten Matthäus."[6] The various treatments of this topic of Law in the works of W. Trilling,[7] G. Strecker,[8] R. Hummel,[9] S. Schulz,[10] and K. Berger[11] all run into the same basic difficulty. Their carefully constructed views on "Matthew and the Law" rudely collide with certain redactional texts in Mt and — worse still — with statements made by the scholars themselves elsewhere in their own monographs.[12] It is indicative of the situation that M. Suggs, after treating Wisdom-Christology in Mt with great aplomb, ends his short consideration of Mt 5:17-20 with a confession of bewilderment.[13]

It is no wonder, then, that works on Mt's theology often either (1) skirt the issue of Law in favor of other themes (Christology, eschatology, etc.), or (2) summarily dismiss the Law-question with a statement that Mt had not thought out the whole problem of Law, or that he was eclectic (or sloppy!) in his treatment.[14] But the Law-question will not go away

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[6] Barth, "Das Gesetzesverständnis des Evangelisten Matthäus," 54-154.

[7] Trilling, *Das Wahre Israel,* especially 167-211.

[8] Strecker, *Der Weg der Gerechtigkeit,* especially 130-175.

[9] Hummel, *Die Auseinandersetzung,* especially 34-75.

[10] Schulz, *Die Stunde der Botschaft;* the section on Mt is found on pp. 157-234; cf. especially 174-197 for the question of the Law.

[11] Berger, *Die Gesetzesauslegung Jesu. Teil I: Markus und Parallelen.* A second volume, treating the antitheses, has been promised.

[12] For example, the sixth chapter of Hummel's second edition of *Auseinandersetzung* (pp. 162-173) almost unsays what Hummel says in the body of the first edition. Even more frustrating is the work of McConnell, *Law and Prophecy in Matthew's Gospel.* On p. 23, he presents a view of 5:18d that is very close to the position espoused in this chapter of our thesis. Then, without any solid reasons given, he retreats on p. 29 to the "legalistic" position. He claims that too much has been read into 18d in making it refer to the prophetic content of Scripture; rather, 18d refers to the performing of the normative commands of Scripture. Then, almost apologetically, he concludes on p. 30: "A fully satisfactory solution to this phrase [5:18d] has not been achieved." McConnell also tends to oscillate between the level of the historical Jesus and the level of the evangelist (cf. pp. 6-9). The final impression is that of a very uneven, self-contradictory treatment.

[13] M. Suggs, *Wisdom, Christology, and Law in Matthew's Gospel* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1970) 116-117. Even stronger on the importance of Wisdom-Christology in the pre-Matthean and pre-Lukan traditions is F. Christ, *Jesus Sophia* (Zürich: Zwingli-Verlag, 1970); see pp. 153-154 for the author's conclusions. For a recent critique of Suggs' position on Wisdom-Christology in Mt, cf. M. Johnson, "Reflections on a Wisdom Approach to Matthew's Christology," *CBQ* 36 (1974) 44-64. But does Johnson really do justice to Mt 11:25-30, especially vss. 28-30? For a critique of Johnson's arguments, cf. Schweizer, "Christus und Gemeinde im Matthäusevangelium," 54 n. 206.

[14] It is unfortunate that A. Descamps, in his excellent article, "Essai d'interprétation de Mt 5, 17-48. Formgeschichte ou Redaktionsgeschichte?" *Studia Evangelica I,* 156-173, ends his careful analysis by saying that Mt has shown himself "eclectic" in editing these verses (cf. pp. 172-173). We hope to show, especially in our treatment

so easily. It is too central an issue to be ignored in a consideration of Matthean redaction, and Mt is too careful a composer in his Law-pericopes to be dismissed as eclectic or confused. No one who studies the careful composition of 5:17-20, which is immediately followed by the apparently contradictory 5:21-48,[15] will dismiss Mt's view on Law as a confused position that has not been carefully thought out.

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of 5:17-18, that Mt is not operating in an eclectic manner. — Goulder, *Midrash and Lection,* claims that all the M-material dealing with the Law comes directly from Mt himself. Mt is loyal to the whole Law, written and oral (p. 15). There are indeed inconsistencies with, e.g., the antitheses (p. 20). But then, Mt was trying to reconcile the radicalism of Mk (and Jesus) with his own loyalty to the Torah; so inconsistency is to be expected. As a result of his position, Goulder is not able to explain satisfactorily the relation of 16:5-12 to 23:2-3 (pp. 382, 422-423). Goulder fails to realize that there is a difference between being inconsistent on an individual point and being schizoid on one of the most important issues in the gospel.

[15] Here we might anticipate briefly a point which will be raised in Chapter IV. G. Eichholz, *Auslegung der Bergpredigt* (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1965) 67, following Bornkamm and many others, notes the apparent "discrepancy" between 5:18-19 and 5:21-48; so, too, H. Baltensweiler, *Die Ehe im Neuen Testament* (Zurich: Zwingli-Verlag, 1967) 80; and McConnell, *Law and Prophecy,* 33-34. This insight is hardly new. H. J. Holtzmann thought that any attempt to harmonize 5:18 with the antitheses was hopeless; cf. his *Lehrbuch der neutestamentlichen Theologie*[2] (Tübingen: Mohr, 1911) I, 204-205; cf. also Windisch, *Der Sinn der Bergpredigt,* 52. In fact, we might say that *the* great antithesis in Mt 5 is the antithesis between 5:17-20 and 5:21-48. And it will not do to try to dissolve the discrepancy by appealing to oriental exaggeration, to a "hyperbolic" (Bornkamm) or "metaphorical" (Barth, Schulz) expression, which is not to be taken literally. (1) One must be clear on what one means by the "metaphorical" sense of 5:18. Obviously, "yod" and "stroke" are to be taken as metaphors for the smallest, most insignificant parts of the Law, which *are* to be observed to the letter. To try to avoid this clear meaning is to make 5:18 a metaphor twice-over. (2) This attempt to make 5:18 a metaphor twice-over collides with the obvious, unavoidable thrust of this verse: literal observance of the Law in its smallest parts. This is precisely the force of the emphatic postposition of *hen,* reinforced by *mia*: "not even the slightest part...." It is one thing not to take strictly a statement like: if your right eye scandalizes you, pluck it out. It is another thing not to take strictly a statement like: all these legal prescriptions are to be observed to the letter, in their smallest details; anyone who tries to relax the smallest commandment will suffer the consequences. (3) Moreover, we are faced with the fact that when Mt took over from Q a statement that not the smallest part of the Law would pass away, he did *not* change the core of that statement (5:18c), as he well might have. Rather, he limited it temporally (5:18d) and, with this temporal limitation, placed it as the introduction to the antitheses. All this redactional activity argues for a precise redactional intent that cannot be reduced to metaphor or oriental exaggeration. Cf. on this Suggs, *Wisdom, Christology, and Law,* 113; and J. Rausch, "The Principle of Nonresistance and Love of Enemy in Mt 5:38-48," *CBQ* 28 (1966) 31-41, especially 34. (4) The careful redactional activity of Mt both here and throughout his gospel should make one wary of a general appeal to Mt's oriental way of thinking, so different from the ways of western logic. The architectonic structure of the gospel may not reflect pure Aristotelian "logic," but it certainly shows a mind that operates in a clear, logical way. When one considers that the Hellenistic syncretism reigning in the first century A.D. had blurred the neat distinction between "oriental" and "occidental," and when one considers that an acceptance of a Gentile author makes the intellectual provenience of the author at least problematic (was he indeed "oriental"?), one is more careful about an appeal to "oriental" modes of thought. An *a priori* principle that is free at any any moment to appeal to oriental exaggeration could short-circuit any statement of Mt at will. Would one be willing to apply such a principle of interpretation to,

Having made an initial attempt to see the place and importance of 5:17-20 within the whole of Mt's gospel, we come to the exegesis of the individual verses. How should we proceed? The most natural method would be to take each verse in the order in which it appears in the gospel. But immediately we face a problem. None of our verses has any parallel except 5:18 (= Lk 16:17). It seems advisable, therefore, to make an exception to the rule of following the given order, and to place 5:18 first in our treatment, since it offers the greatest possibilities for using objective "controls" in discerning tradition and redaction.[16] But, besides having a Lukan parallel, Mt 5:18 is also of key exegetical importance because it seems to be the pericope's most stringent and uncompromising proclamation of the perduring value of the Mosaic Law (in apparent contradiction to the very antitheses it introduces). Consequently, we think 5:18 offers the best and at the same time the most challenging entrance into the thought-world of 5:17-20. Once we have gained an insight into Mt's position on Law by seeing his redaction of 5:18, we will be in a better position to go back and interpret 5:17. Then we will go on to complete our exegesis by treating 5:19-20.

The treatment of each verse will be divided into two parts. Part One will consider basic philological and historical questions that must be settled first. Since much of the undisputed grammatical information can be readily found in the standard reference works (such as W. Bauer's *Wörterbuch* and the famous grammar of F. Blass-A. Debrunner),[17] references will be made to them only in very important matters or in areas of debate. Then, in Part Two we will apply what we learned in Part One to the larger problem of discerning pre-Matthean tradition and Matthean

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e.g., the metaphors and legal formulations in Mt 16:18-19? (5) We might note by way of conclusion that vs. 18 is followed by a verse that is even legal in form; cf. E. Käsemann's description of the Principles of Holy Law in "Sentences of Holy Law in the New Testament," *New Testament Questions Today* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1969) 66-81, and his "The Beginnings of Christian Theology," in *Journal for Theology and the Church* 6 (1969) 17-46. But see also the critique of Käsemann's view by K. Berger, "Zu den sogenannten Sätzen heiligen Rechts," *NTS* 17 (1970-71) 10-40. — In short, when all is said and done, the basic question remains: How does one take a legal formulation demanding literal observance non-literally?

[16] This is the method chosen by Trilling, *Israel*, 167. The central importance of 5:18 to the whole pericope is well brought out in two articles by Schweizer, "Matth. 5, 17-20 — Anmerkungen zum Gesetzesverständnis des Matthäus," *TLZ* 77 (1952) 479-484, and "Noch einmal Mt 5, 17-20," in *Das Wort und die Wörter* (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1973) 69-73. As the titles indicate, Schweizer intends in each article to treat the whole sense of 5:17-20; yet both essays are almost entirely dedicated to the question of tradition and redaction in 5:18.

[17] W. Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (translators: W. Arndt and F. Gingrich; Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1957) — we have also checked the fifth German edition; and F. Blass-A. Debrunner, *A Greek Grammar of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (translator: R. Funk; Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1961). Henceforth, these two basic reference works will be cited simply as "Bauer" and "Blass-Debrunner."

redaction. No doubt, solving grammatical puzzles in Part One will not be as absorbing as doing the redactional study that makes up Part Two. But a small error in fundamental matters could lead to large blunders in our redactional work. There is no substitute for philological analysis.

Finally, after we have treated each verse separately, we shall consider the redaction of the whole unit and ask whether it fits into and confirms the view of Mt we sketched in Chapters I and II. We begin, then, with the analysis of 5:18.

SECTION A: Mt 5:18

Part One: **Philological and Historical Data for Mt 5:18**

Amēn. In the OT, *Amēn* was used by the individual and the community to affirm acceptance of an allotted task, to confirm the personal application of a divine threat or curse, or to attest the praise of God in response to a doxology. The LXX usually translates it by *genoito,* occasionally by *Amēn.* Especially interesting is the use in Jer 28:6 (MT): *Amēn* stands at the beginning of a wish of Jeremiah, but it is probably to be understood as an answer to Hananiah in vs. 4. (The corresponding verse in the LXX, Jer 35:6, has *alēthōs.*) In its widespread use in Judaism (notably in the synagogue), the word keeps its character of response, though it is sometimes used as a response to one's own prayer. In the NT and the Christian world, *Amēn* is used as a liturgical acclamation in Christian worship (thus retaining its character of a response), and as a conclusion to Christian prayers and doxologies. It could also be placed at the beginning of a prayer, especially when it formed the link between two doxologies. In the NT and the early first century A.D., the usage of Jesus stands out as unique. Jesus alone has *Amēn* before his own sayings in the synoptic gospels (31× in Mt, 13× in Mk, and 6× in Lk, though the latter also uses *alēthōs* and *ep'alētheias*). In Jn's gospel, it is used 25× in a doubled form (therefore, 50× in all in Jn). G. Dalman suggests that Jesus' usage is conditioned by his avoidance of oaths, but H. Schlier denies this.[18] K. Berger points to two examples of *Amēn* at the beginning of a sentence (thus corresponding to the supposedly unique usage of Jesus) in Jewish-Greek apocalyptic

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[18] G. Dalman, *Die Worte Jesu* (Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1930) 187 (denying the oath character of *Amēn*); H. Schlier, "amen," *TDNT* I (ed. G. Kittel; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964) 337-338. Schlier sees in the use of the word not only an affirmation of truth but also a demand for assent and commitment on the part of the hearer. E. Lohmeyer, *Das Evangelium des Matthäus* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1967) 109, sees a rather subtle theological conception of Jesus as the mediator of revelation, who by his *Amēn* answers both God's Word to him and testifies to the truth of this Word before men with eschatological solemnity.

literature, i.e., in the *Testamentum Abrahae* (recension A, 8 and 20).[19] But the problematic dating of the *Testamentum Abrahae* leaves open the question whether these examples are not due to Christian influence.[20] For our own research in this thesis, the most important fact about *Amēn* is that only Mt has the formula *amēn gar legō hymin* (4×: 5:18; 10:23; 13:17; 17:20).[21] The two verses from Q (5:18 and 13:17) indicate that Mt probably added the particular *Amēn*-formula in each case. This point will be very important when we attempt to separate tradition from redaction in Part Two.

Gar. This conjunction can be used to express cause or reason, explanation ("for," "you see"), inference ("so," "then"), or continuation of thought. The variety of meanings should warn us against an *a priori* stressing of the causal link between vss. 17 and 18.

Legō. G. Kittel claims that the highly emphatic *legō* of the formula *egō legō hymin* characterizes the authoritative sayings of Jesus. It *is*

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[19] Berger, *Die Amen-Worte Jesu* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1970) 4 (cf. the fine bibliography on *Amēn* on 1 n. 1); on 5 n. 7, Berger admits that the *Testamentum Abrahae* has Christian interpolations, but denies this of the texts he uses for the proof of his thesis. — A different explanation of *Amēn* is attempted by J. Stiassny in "Jésus accomplit la promesse. Essai d'interprétation de Mt 5, 17-19," *BVC* 59 (1964) 33. Stiassny suggests that Jesus used not *Amēn* but *Aken*; the letter kaf was later confused with the letter mem. Stiassny thinks this hypothesis is justified by the fact that we have no such examples of *Amēn* before Jesus. But (1) This theory attributes too much importance to the literary transmission of Jesus' words; the oral transmission (in which the confusion would be highly unlikely) existed first and continued to exert influence on the tradition; (2) Daube, "Three Questions," has pointed out how the OT and rabbinic usage would have tended naturally towards Jesus' usage; (3) Stiassny overlooks the possibility that Jesus himself might have chosen this new form of expression to emphasize the newness of what he had to say. — Close to the position of Berger is that of V. Hasler, *Amen. Redaktionsgeschichtliche Untersuchung zur Einführungsformel der Herrenworte "Wahrlich ich sage euch."* (Zurich-Stuttgart: Gotthelf, 1969). Hasler, like Berger, denies that the NT usage of *Amēn* goes back to Jesus. But Hasler disagrees totally with Berger on the true origin of the *Amēn*-logia in the NT. While Berger points to apocalyptic currents in Hellenistic-Jewish Christianity, Hasler refers to the charismatic prophets speaking in the name of the exalted Lord. Hasler also disagrees totally with Berger on the tradition history of 5:18. Such disagreements are perhaps the best caution reminding us not to deny the origin of the *Amēn*-usage in Jesus too quickly. The disagreements also warn us not to build a tradition history of a logion like 5:18 on the shaky grounds of a very dubious hypothesis.

[20] M. James, *The Testament of Abraham* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1892) 29-55, favors a date for the original composition in the second century, with a re-editing in the ninth or tenth century; on p. 51 he notes that recension A has many more "Christianisms" than recension B. G. H. Box, *The Testament of Abraham* (London: SPCK, 1927) xxviii-xxix, postulates a Hebrew form of the book for the first half of the first century A.D.; this would have formed the basis of a free Greek version, which, according to Box, is basically, though not entirely, free from Christian influence. Cf. also D. Russell, *The Method and Message of Jewish Apocalyptic* (London: SCM, 1971) 60-61. — Joachim Jeremias refuted Berger in his short note, "Zum nicht-responsorischen Amen," *ZNW* 64 (1973) 122-123; Sand sides with Jeremias in *Gesetz*, 37; also critical of Berger is G.-C. Kähler in his review of *Die Amen-Worte Jesu* in *TLZ* 97 (1972) 200-202.

[21] Sand, *Gesetz*, 36, is mistaken when he says Mt found the formula *amēn gar legō hymin* in Mk; strangely, he has the correct information on p. 37.

possible that *legō*, when it is linked with *Amēn*, does represent a conscious peculiarity of the words of Jesus.[22] But this is not true of *legō* taken by itself (cf. Mt 3:9 and Lk 3:8: *legō gar hymin*, spoken by the Baptist). It is better to say that the authoritative note in Christ's use of *legō* is based on the context (e.g., setting aside traditional authorities, Mt 5:21ff) and on the person of Christ himself (e.g., Mt 13:17).

Heōs. Here it is used as a temporal conjunction, to denote the end of a period of time: "till, until"; it is employed here with *an* and the aorist subjunctive to denote that the commencement of an event is dependent on circumstances (W. Bauer quotes Mt 5:18 under this meaning). It is important for the subsequent exegesis to stress here that "until" is the *only* possible meaning. There are no solid grounds for changing the meaning to "in order that."[23]

Parerchomai. Similar usages in the OT include LXX Ps 148:6. J. Schneider detects in 5:18 the sense of perishing in an eschatological context, and so gives Mt 5:18, Mt 24:35, Mk 13:31, and Lk 16:17 a common interpretation: heaven and earth and the Law will all pass

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[22] G. Kittel, *TDNT* IV, 102.

[23] Most of Bauer's examples with the meaning "until" are in the aorist subjunctive with *an* (though at times *an* is omitted); the examples with the future indicative are much fewer. The conjunction can also mean "as long as," "while," but most of Bauer's examples are in the present indicative; the two examples he quotes for the subjunctive in the NT literature (Mk 14:32; Lk 17:8) lack the *an*. The most important point here is that Bauer does not recognize a separate final meaning, "so that meanwhile," "in order that meanwhile." This notably weakens the thesis of E. Schweizer that the second *heōs*-clause has a final rather than a temporal sense. Schweizer first proposed this thesis in "Matth. 5, 17-20 — Anmerkungen zum Gesetzesverständnis des Matthäus," and repeated it in "Gesetz und Enthusiasmus bei Matthäus," in *Beiträge zur Theologie des Neuen Testaments* (Zurich: Zwingli-Verlag, 1970) 49-70, especially 51. Recently, in "Noch einmal Mt 5, 17-20," he revised his view in the light of Berger's theory of the *Amēn*-words. Even with his shift of position, Schweizer still maintains the final meaning of the second *heōs*-clause in the Matthean redaction (although he admits that the pre-Matthean tradition had a temporal sense referring to the events of the end-time). But the NT examples Schweizer brings forward in "Noch einmal Mt 5, 17-20" (p. 71) are weak: Mk 6:45 and 14:32 both mean "while" (so rightly Bauer); Mt 14:22 (= Mk 6:45) reads *heōs hou*, with the same meaning of "while." In other words, Schweizer can produce no clear-cut NT example of *heōs an* = "in order that." On p. 73 n. 15 of "Noch einmal," Schweizer is forced to admit that even outside the NT the final sense with *heōs an* (instead of just *heōs*) is rare. But he proceeds to point out in n. 16 that in Codex B the *an* in the second *heōs*-clause is lacking. He then suggests that B could have the more difficult and therefore the original reading. We might answer that the omission of *an* in 5:18d is very poorly attested (according to Legg: original hand of B and two later MSS, 482 and 1604). The omission is easily explained from a desire to avoid an apparent redundancy in 5:18b+d. The repetition of *heōs an* in both 18b and 18d is really the *lectio difficilior*. The modern editions of Tischendorf, von Soden, Vogels, Bover, Nestle, Aland, and Merk all keep the *an* in 5:18d, without brackets or parentheses. The upshot of all this is that Schweizer has not proven his thesis about a final sense in 5:18d. A serious exegesis must take both 5:18b and 5:18d in a temporal sense even in the Matthean redaction and explain the text accordingly. — Unfortunately, the final sense of 5:18d has attracted a goodly following; cf., e.g., D. Hill, *The Gospel of Matthew* (London: Oliphants, 1972) 118.

away at the end of this age, but Jesus' words will not.[24] As for the passing of heaven and earth, both the rabbis and the apocrypha reflect two different views: (1) a purification and transformation of the earth (sometimes referred to as a "new world"); (2) a slipping of the world back into primordial chaos, or a complete annihilation, to be followed by a "new creation" in the strict sense. Especially interesting is the opinion attributed to R. Judan (c. A.D. 350) speaking in the name of R. Shemuel ben Nachman (c. A.D. 260), on Gen 8:22: "How then can the sons of Noah [i.e., non-Israelites] think that the covenant that has been made with them [Gen 8:22] will always perdure? Rather, so long as heaven and earth remain, shall the covenant with them remain. But when that day comes, of which it is written: 'the heavens will vanish like smoke, etc.' [Is 51:6], on that day will the covenant be broken." Cf. also the Targum Jerusalem II on Dt 32:1: Heaven and earth will not cease in this world, but will cease in the future world. Is 65:17 ("I am going to create new heavens and a new earth and the past shall no longer be remembered") is also a frequent citation in these discussions.[25]

Ouranos. This word occurs in Mt 84×,[26] 58× in the plural that is almost unknown in classical Greek. The combination "heaven and earth" refers to the whole of creation seen as a unity. The phrase "the heavens and/or the earth" occurs a number of times in the NT with reference to their passing away or re-creation: Mk 13:31 parr.; Apoc 20:11; 21:1; Heb 12:26 (cf. Hag 2:6); 2Pt 3:10-12 (cf. Is 65:17; 66:22); see also Heb 1:11f (cf. LXX Ps 101:26ff). In the light of these OT and NT passages and the Jewish opinions we saw when we treated *parerchomai,* it is perhaps rather cavalier to dismiss without further discussion the phrase "till heaven and earth pass away" as an idiomatic expression for "never."[27] Especially in the heady apocalyptic atmosphere

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[24] J. Schneider, "parerchomai" *TDNT* II, 682. In note 5, Schneider mentions rabbinic parallels that predicate of the Law what Jesus says of his own words. For the whole question of the passing or non-passing of the Law, cf. W. D. Davies, *Torah in the Messianic Age and/or the Age to Come* (Philadelphia: Society of Biblical Literature Monograph Series, 1952); Davies incorporated this monograph, with additions (especially with regard to the Qumran material), into his *Setting,* 109-315. The question has been taken up again by P. Schäfer, "Die Torah der messianischen Zeit," *ZNW* 65 (1974) 27-42.

[25] For all this material and many other citations, cf. H. Strack - P. Billerbeck, *Kommentar zum Neuen Testament aus Talmud und Midrasch. Erster Band: Das Evangelium nach Matthäus* (Munich: Beck, 1926) 242-246.

[26] The count of the present writer; R. Morgenthaler, *Statistik des neutestamentlichen Wortschatzes* (Zurich: Gotthelf, 1958) 127, counts 82 ×, perhaps because of different decisions about variant readings.

[27] The idea of "never" is supported in W. Allen, *The Gospel According to S. Matthew*[3] (Edinburgh: Clark, 1912) 46; J. Schmid, *Das Evangelium nach Matthäus*[5] (Regensburg: Pustet, 1965) 87; E. Klostermann, *Das Matthäusevangelium* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1938) 41; Rothfuchs, *Erfüllungszitate,* 51; and, at least for the stage of Jewish-Christian tradition, E. Massaux, "Les relations entre la Loi ancienne et la Loi nou-

of the first century A.D., "till heaven and earth pass away" would not have had that note of stability that we associate with it. On the other hand, we cannot ignore such examples of Philo, *Vita Moysis* II, 136, where the permanence of the Law is affirmed and then a *heōs an* (!) clause is added: "until the sun and the moon and the whole heaven and world be moved." The context in Philo seems to favor the sense of the clause equaling "never." Of course, we must remember that Philo's whole approach to eschatology was radically different from that of Mt and of the rest of the NT. H. Traub, in agreement with Schneider and also with Lohmeyer, sees Mt 5:18 as linking the existence of the Law with the existence of the first heaven and earth;[28] for reasons we will set forth in Part Two, we agree with this view. *Both* heaven and earth *and* the Law are signs of stability in the present aeon; both will ultimately pass away. (Since we have treated "heaven and earth" as a unit here, we will omit a separate treatment of *gē*.)

Iōta. Mt (or, more likely, Q) uses this Greek word to translate "yod," the smallest letter of the so-called square Hebrew alphabet (as opposed to the archaic Hebrew alphabet, in which the yod was one of the largest letters).[29] The idea of the yod as representing the whole Law (because of the Law's indissoluble unity) is reflected in many variants of a rabbinic story about Dt 17:17. According to the story, the book of Deuteronomy complained before the Lord because Solomon had abolished a yod in it, and had therefore in principle abolished the Law. The Lord declares: "Solomon and a thousand like him will pass, but not one word of you shall pass."[30] Variants of the story substitute

velle selon Mt. V, 17-48," *Revue diocésaine de Namur* 12 (1958) 265-283, especially 267. For the opposite view, cf. amongst others W. Schmauch, "Reich Gottes und menschliche Existenz nach der Bergpredigt," in W. Schmauch - E. Wolf, *Königsherrschaft Christi* (Munich: Kaiser, 1958) 5-19, especially 14. A. Honeyman, "Matthew V 18 and the Validity of the Law," *NTS* 1 (1954) 141-142, suggests that the semitic basis of *heōs an* is the Hebrew *ad she* (*asher*) or the Aramaic *ad de*, giving us "before heaven and earth" etc.... "so that (on the contrary) all will be fulfilled." But the relevance of semitic substructure is questionable when we are raising the question of what Mt himself meant, especially if he added 18d (and, *a fortiori*, if he was a Gentile).

[28] H. Traub, "ouranos," *TDNT* V, 515-516; H. Sasse, "gē," *TDNT* I, 678, believes Mt 5:18 asserts that the present heaven and earth will pass away. For Sasse, "a new heaven and a new earth" is merely the older way of denoting what is meant in rabbinic parlance by *aiōn mellōn*, namely, the future world of eschatological expectation.

[29] But see Dalman's dissent on this point in *Die Worte Jesu*, 4-5. Most later commentators seem not to have followed him in his attempt to see the *iōta* as a Greek addition to the original logion, which supposedly mentioned only the *keraia*, as in Lk 16:17. Against Dalman one might ask whether the Greek *iōta* in majuscule manuscripts can be considered a paradigm of smallness. F. Cross, in his essay, "The Development of the Jewish Scripts," in *The Bible and the Ancient Near East* (Garden City: Doubleday, 1966) 170-264, seems to have shown conclusively that the small yod would have been known in the first century A.D.

[30] Strack-Billerbeck, *Kommentar* I, 246-247, especially in the Palestinian Talmud, Tractate *Sanhedrin* 2, 20c. Commentators do not agree on how Solomon was thought to have changed the Law. Strack-Billerbeck suggest an interchange of the yod and

"not one stroke" (Exodus Rabba), or "not one yod" (Aggadath Bereshith). Note that this story and many like it are used to assert the eternal validity of the Law in relation to something (or someone) else that passes away.[31] We can thus appreciate all the more the strange juxtaposition in Mt 5:18, where a phrase usually denoting the eternal validity of the Law receives the limitation of an eschatological *terminus ad quem.*

Heis. This word at times passes from the strict numerical meaning to an indefinite article. But here the emphasis seems to lie on the number because of the repetition of the word.[32] The infrequent postposition of *heis* is probably due to semitic influence.

Keraia. The word literally means a horn, a projection, and then, figuratively, a hook as a part of a letter. The word was used in Greek to denote accents and breathings, and figuratively, to denote something quite insignificant. The fact that even in Greek the word can have a figurative sense is important, since then it is quite easy to see *iōta* and *keraia* as natural metaphors for insignificant parts of the Law. Opinions on what *keraia* refers to in the Hebrew-Aramaic alphabet vary. The two main views proposed in the past were that it refers to either (1) the stroke that distinguishes similar letters (beth and kaf; daleth and resh; he and ḥeth; this would agree with the idea of the yod as something small that could make a great difference in the sense), or (2) the *tāgîn* (crowns) or *qoṣot* (thorns), the ornaments of certain letters (cf. *Menaḥoth* 296 — in this case, *keraia* would mean something totally insignificant; but there is the problem of whether the *tāgîn* were in use in the first century A.D.).[33] Other suggestions have included the conjecture that the two words were originally an example of Hebraic parallelism and did not refer to two different things.[34] But the study

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the aleph of Dt 17:17, thus changing "he shall not multiply," to "I shall multiply for myself." But this interchange could hardly justify the charge that Solomon was trying to destroy a yod or make it pass away. D. Margoliouth, "One Jot or Tittle (Mt 5,18)," *The Expositor* 23 (1922) 182-192, suggests that the abolition of the yod was meant to change the imperfect to the perfect: "No, he has not multiplied," or "Has he not multiplied . . . ?" Margoliouth sees the original form of Mt 5:18 as reading "not one letter," but his reconstruction (achieved by comparing the Talmudic passages with the Syriac of Mt) is at best dubious. Daube, "Violence to the Kingdom," 285-300, says Solomon had changed "he shall not multiply wives to himself" to read "to a multitude of wives to himself" (p. 298).

[31] For the complicated question of the rabbinic view on the eternal validity of the Law, cf. n. 24 of this chapter.

[32] Cf. R. Banks, "Matthew's Understanding of the Law: Authenticity and Interpretation in Matthew 5:17-20," *JBL* 93 (1974) 226-242, especially 234: ". . . since the emphasis particularly rests upon the repetition of the numeral, any attempt to circumvent the emphasis placed upon even the most insignificant elements in the Law must be resisted." In n. 25 on p. 234, Banks cites the different vain attempts to avoid this conclusion.

[33] Strack-Billerbeck, *Kommentar* I, 247-249, exclude the first explanation in favor of the second. While E. Sutcliffe, "One Jot or Tittle, Mt 5,18," *Bib* 9 (1928) 258-260, favors the *tāgîn,* he thinks that such authors as Strack-Billerbeck are unjustified in rejecting the possibility of the first explanation.

[34] W. Auer, "Iota unum aut unus apex non praeteribit a lege (Mt 5,18)," *BK* 14

of F. Cross (cf. footnote 29 of this chapter) seems to have proven that the *keraia* refers to an ornamentation of the Herodian book-hand; Cross also points out that the term *tittle,* like the rabbinic terms *qoṣ* and *tāgā',* is usually taken in older literature to apply to an ornamentation which developed only in medieval times.[35]

Nomos. We must face here the perennial problem of whether the word should be translated as Law, Pentateuch (Torah in this sense), or Scripture. Taking into account the use of *nomon* as opposed to *prophētas* in vs. 17, the references to teaching or setting aside *entolai* in vs. 19, and the rabbinic parallels about Deuteronomy which we discussed under *iōta,* the meaning of Torah (Pentateuch) seems to be the best choice.[36] Certainly, the reference to *keraia* in the sense of an ornamentation of script shows that *nomos* here means the written Law, not the oral traditions that also counted for Torah among the Pharisees. As A. Sand emphasizes, *nomos* for Mt means the Torah of the OT seen as a whole, both as the revelatory Word of God and as a normative Law. On the other hand, as we shall see, *entolē* refers rather to the individual ordinance in the Torah.[37] All the more interesting, then, is the use of images for the smallest parts of the Law (yod and stroke) in conjunction with the word signifying the Law as a whole. The obvious sense of 5:18c is that even the smallest commandment of the Law is an integral and inviolable part of the whole Law. Again, we see how difficult it is to dismiss the core statement of 5:18 as merely "metaphorical." Vs. 5:18c means what it says.

(1959) 97-103. His article contains a useful history of opinions, but it is not too critical in its judgments. Other suggestions, to be found in A. M'Neile, *The Gospel According to St. Matthew* (London: Macmillan, 1915) *ad loc.,* include the following: (1) since erasing a yod could make quite a difference in meaning, the allusion could be to the yod used as a *mater lectionis;* (2) in early Aramaic documents, yod and waw were often indistinguishable; the Aramaic reading, "one ו," might give rise to different translations such as "one yod," (the original form in Mt) and "one stroke" (Lk 16:17); in this case, *keraia* would be a later harmonizing addition to Mt. But, as we have noted, Cross' investigation has made these various theories outdated.

[35] Cross, "The Development," 259.

[36] Berger, *Amen-Worte,* 33, tries to make *nomos* in vs. 18 refer not to the Mosaic Law, but to the norm according to which reward and punishment will be given out at the last judgment — a norm revealed directly to the apocalyptic seer. Needless to say, this runs completely counter to the context, to the use of *nomos* in vs. 17, and to the use of *nomos* in Mt in general. What Berger says about the norm of reward and punishment is true of 5:19, not of 5:18. On p. 74, n. 58, he admits that in the present Matthean form, 5:18 refers "only secondarily" to the norm of the last judgment. — But Berger is very helpful in giving a survey of the problem of the translation of Torah by *nomos* in the LXX; see his *Die Gesetzesauslegung Jesu* I, 32-38.

[37] Sand, *Gesetz,* 33-36; since Sand is very perceptive when it comes to defining the concepts *nomos* and *entolē,* it is especially disappointing to see him simply adopt the positions of Barth and Schweizer on 5:18. All his insights on the prophetic aspect of Mt's thought fail to have any impact on his interpretation of this pivotal verse (pp. 36-39). Closer to the truth is B. Rigaux, *The Testimony of St. Matthew* (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1968) 70.

Ginomai. In our judgment, the verb of 18d probably should be translated "happen," "take place," "come to pass." But this is a debated point which must be examined in detail. Vs. 5:18d is strongly reminiscent of some of the introductions to the RZ in Mt: e.g., *touto holon gegonen hina plērōthēi* etc. (Mt 1:22 — cf. *plērōsai* in 5:17; similarly 21:4 and 26:54+56). W. Bauer places 5:18 *not* under the meaning of fulfilling a command, but under the meaning of an event's taking place; he translates Mt 5:18 as "until all has taken place (i.e., is past)." Matthean usage does not favor a translation of *ginomai* as "be done," or "obeyed," referring to law. Trilling is forced to admit that Mt 6:10 and 26:42 are the only two places where *ginomai* means "do" in Mt; and, to this extent, he has Bauer's support. But, with regard to 6:10 and 26:42, we should stress two points. (1) In these two cases, the passive form is used, with *thelēma* as subject; the two cases are hardly precise parallels to 5:18d. (2) In these two cases, it is a question of the will of the Father, not of a law or laws to be observed. And in both cases the phrase primarily means that the Father is asked to do — i.e., cause to come to full realization — his own will (not, of course, without the activity of men). So the two examples do not refer to mere observance of law.[38] Furthermore, Trilling has to admit that there are some seventy other examples in Mt of *ginomai* referring to the "happening" of an event. Apparently as a last resort he says that while 18d formally comes from 24:34 (where it obviously has the prophesied-event connotation) the sense in vs. 18 must be determined by the context.[39]

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[38] Cf. the observations made by some of the main commentaries on Mt 6:10: Allen, *The Gospel According to S. Matthew,* 58; Grundmann, *Das Evangelium nach Matthäus,* 200; P. Bonnard, *L'Evangile selon saint Matthieu*[2] (Neuchatel: Delachaux et Niestlé, 1970) 84. We do not deny that Mt 6:10 also refers to the fact that the divine will must be obeyed by men; cf. M.-E. Jacquemin, "La portée de la troisième demande du 'Pater,'" *ETL* 25 (1949) 61-76 (though Jacquemin is not strong enough on the pre-eminence of God's initiative). We simply stress that *genēthētō* has a much richer theological sense. God's action is to bring about the eschatological event in which men will obey his holy will; cf. Lohmeyer, *Das Vater-unser*[3] (Zurich: Zwingli, 1952) 75-92, especially 84-90 (quite good on the divine, eschatological initiative in *genēthētō*); also Lange, *Erscheinen,* 100-113. *Genēthētō* thus keeps the Matthean note of eschatological event that often is implied in *ginesthai.* This is even clearer in Mt 26:42, where it is a question of the eschatological trial coming upon Jesus. The perfect commentary on *genēthētō* in Mt 26:42 is the *dei genesthai* of 26:54 and the *touto de holon gegonen* etc. of 26:56. — J. Carmignac, *Recherches sur le 'Notre Père'* (Paris: Letouzey et Ané, 1969) 106-108, 337-347, is poor on the question of *genēthētō.* His position is not helped by the thesis that Mt wrote the gospel in Hebrew (p. 52)!

[39] Trilling, *Israel,* 169. His attempt to extort a legal sense out of 18d is the most persuasive argument we have seen for taking 18d in the sense of a prophesied event. Trilling did espouse a *heilsgeschichtliche* interpretation of 5:18d in the first edition of *Das Wahre Israel,* 140-143: 5:18 referred to the fulfillment of God's plans, not primarily to ethical commands of the Law. In the third edition, however, Trilling shifted to an ethical-legal interpretation of 5:18d: the whole Law must be done (p. 169). This change occasioned Trilling's difficulty over *ginesthai* (cf. p. 169 n. 11), a difficulty that he never really solves. He would have been better advised to have maintained the interpretation of the first edition. In this regard, cf. also H. Ljungman, *Das*

The fact that 18d does seem to refer to the coming to pass of prophesied events will be important later for judging how Mt intended to reinterpret the tradition before him. Ljungman, who also wishes to interpret *ginomai* as "be done," is forced to go outside Matthean usage to Lk 14:22 — which seems to be a true example of this meaning, unless *gegonen* means "everything is as you ordered." Note, however, that even here in Lk it is a question of an individual command, not of a whole *nomos* to be observed and carried out. Note also the difficulty of making the neuter plural *panta* refer to *nomos* without some further clarification, like *panta tou nomou* — a clarification which is not forth-coming in the text. The precise meaning of *panta* in 5:18d will become clearer when we come to the question of tradition and redaction in Part Two.

Grammar. As for grammatical points in vs. 18, we may note that *ou mē* and the subjunctive are used for the strong negation of future events; the construction is rare in the NT (except for the words of Jesus) and in the papyri. The expression of "no yod" etc. by *hen ... mia ... ou mē* is probably semitic, although there are genuine Greek examples. The two *heōs an* + subjunctive clauses create a clumsy effect, and suggest conflation or editing — an important point for our consideration of tradition and redaction. Reference to the size of the yod, the postpositive *hen,* and *hen ... mia ... ou mē* suggest that the logion, at least in some form, existed originally in Aramaic.

Text Criticism. As for textual criticism, the variants are of no great importance — a fact that holds true for our whole pericope. Tatian, according to the Codex Venetus and the Codex Neerlandus, reads "one letter"; this seems to be an obvious attempt at simplifying and explaining the *iōta* and *keraia. Hen ē* is missing in the Sinaitic Syriac, Alexandrinus, and a few other Greek codices. *Kai tōn prophētōn* is added by a number of Greek manuscripts (including Koridethi), as well as by the Syropalestinian Syriac, the Armenian, the Georgian, the Latin text of Irenaeus, Aphraates, and the Syrian Liber Graduum. It is obviously a harmonization with vs. 17; *nomou* without *prophētōn* is the *lectio brevior* and — in the immediate context of vs. 17 — *difficilior.* As we have already noted (cf. note 23 of this chapter), a few manuscripts omit *an* in 18d. But even the presence of Vaticanus among these manuscripts does not make the omission likely, since, on the other hand, one manu-

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Gesetz Erfüllen (Lund: Gleerup, 1954) 52. Similar, and just as objectionable, is the position of Schweizer, first affirmed in "Matth. 5, 17-20 — Anmerkungen," reaffirmed in "Gesetz und Enthusiasmus," and adjusted to a new hypothesis in "Noch einmal Mt 5, 17-20": *genētai* refers to the fulfillment of the law of love by Jesus and his disciples. As we have seen, *genētai* in 5:18d probably will not bear the meaning of doing or obeying a commandment. Similarly, to make *panta* mean "all the just demands of the Law," which in turn means "the law of love," is to make too many demands on one simple and vague word. Taking all this together with what we have said in n. 23 above, we would claim that Schweizer is wrong about *heōs an,* about *panta,* and about *genētai.*

script omits *an* in 5:18b. The explanation of these omissions seems to be that the two *heōs an* clauses were felt to be awkward and redundant. Consequently, some manuscripts eased the repetitiveness by omitting the second *an*, while another manuscript chose to omit the first.

Origin. As for the origin of the saying, a vast number of critics echo Bultmann's judgment that the saying (and indeed for him, 5:17-19 as a unit) stems from the debates between the more conservative (Palestinian) communities and those who considered themselves free from the Law (Hellenistic Christians).[40] On the other hand, B. Branscomb holds that Q is here going against its own anti-Pharisaical tendencies by preserving the logion, and that, therefore, there is a good chance that it is a genuine saying of Jesus.[41] For our own part, while stressing that Mt 5:18 as it now stands shows heavy Matthean editing, we would readily admit that it is quite clear that some earlier form of the logion existed in Q, and perhaps before Q (cf. Part Two below). But was 5:18 ever spoken by Jesus in any form? We can certainly imagine likely contexts in the life of Jesus. Jesus might be defending his essential loyalty to the Law against the objections of the Pharisees. Or possibly he was speaking against some disciples who interpreted his freedom vis-à-vis the Law as a license for moral laxity. If Jesus had expressed the idea of 5:18 in some saying, later Jewish-Christians might have given the logion a more stringent tone. But, in the face of all this speculation, we must emphasize that we simply cannot be certain whether Jesus ever spoke 5:18 in any form. And there is no critical way of reconstructing the *ipsissima verba* behind this verse. At any rate, such an attempt lies outside the scope of this thesis.[42]

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[40] R. Bultmann, *Die Geschichte der synoptischen Tradition*[8] (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1970) 147; A. Descamps, *Les justes et la justice* (Gembloux: Duculot, 1950) 121; more recently, H. von Campenhausen, *Die Entstehung der christlichen Bibel* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1968) 20 n. 66. Naturally, there are different expressions of this basic view; some would prefer to see here a debate between more stringent and more moderate groups within Jewish Christianity (H. Schürmann, " 'Wer daher eines dieser geringsten Gebote auflöst....' Wo fand Matthäus das Logion Mt 5,19?" *BZ* 4 [1960] 238-250, especially 249), while others, with an eye to vs. 19, would take vs. 18 as an attack on Paul (so T. W. Manson, H. J. Holtzmann, and A. Loisy; cf. Feuillet, "Morale ancienne," 123). While W. Schmithals, in his *Paul and James* (London: SCM, 1965) 110-111, rightly rejects the latter interpretation, his own unusual view of Christian origins prevents him from reaching a satisfactory interpretation of 5:17-20. Banks, "Matthew's Understanding," 238, rejects the Bultmannian view, but he does so from an erroneous opinion about the primitive form of 5:18 (cf. n. 47 of this chapter).

[41] B. Branscomb, *Jesus and the Law of Moses* (N.Y.: Smith, 1930) 215-216; J. Jeremias, *New Testament Theology* (London: SCM, 1971) I, 211, also defends the authenticity of the saying in a more primitive form.

[42] It is to be regretted that Banks, in his excellent article "Matthew's Understanding," decided to treat in one essay both the meaning the verses have for Mt and the supposed meaning they had for Jesus. In the resulting confusion, one is not always sure as to which historical horizon (Jesus' or the evangelist's) is being discussed in a given sentence. The confidence with which Banks asserts that Jesus actually spoke 5:17-20 in some form (not necessarily all four verses at the same time) does not seem warranted by the data.

Form Criticism. As for form-critical classification, Bultmann's category of "Gesetzwort"[43] is a bit vague, and (as often in Bultmann) describes the content of the logion rather than its form. Strictly speaking, 5:18 is not legal in its form; it resembles neither casuistic nor apodictic law. Mt 5:18 rather resembles five other apocalyptic declarations in the synoptics (not counting parallels) that begin with an *Amēn*-formula and then go on to prophesy that something will not take place until the eschatological event occurs. The set form for these apocalyptic declarations is (1) *Amēn (gar) legō hymin* + (2) *ou (mē)* with the aorist subjunctive + (3) *heōs an* (or *mechris hou* or some equivalent) with the aorist (or present) subjunctive. The five examples in the synoptics are Mk 9:1 (= Mt 16:28; Lk 9:27 [without *Amēn*]); 14:25 (= Mt 26:29 [without *Amēn*]; Lk 22:18 [without *Amēn*]); Mt 5:26; 10:23; and the most important parallel for us, Mk 13:30 (= Mt 24:34 and Lk 21:32); cf. also Jn 13:38. We might describe this form as "the restriction of an event or factor to the present age by stating its terminus" — or, more simply, "apocalyptic restriction." At least it represents the form better than "Gesetzwort."[44]

As we come to the end of our philological analysis of 5:18, let us summarize the salient points of our investigation — points that may prove especially relevant for the study of tradition and redaction in Part Two. (1) *Amēn gar legō hymin* is probably an element of Matthean redaction. (2) *Heōs an* in 5:18d should be taken in the temporal sense of "until." (3) It is possible that 5:18b is not just an idiom for "never,"

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[43] Bultmann, *Geschichte,* 138, 146-147.

[44] For this form, cf. Schweizer, "Noch einmal," 69 (in dependence on Berger, *Die Amen-Worte,* 73-74). Schweizer (p. 70) readily admits that in the cases outside of 5:18, the context is apocalyptic, with the *heōs an* clause referring to the events of the end-time. Schweizer proceeds on pp. 70-72 to assimilate the supposed primitive form of 5:18 to this schema. He holds that the original form was 18acd, with 18d originally referring to the parousia. At a later date 18b was added; perhaps 18 passed into Q in this form, which was adopted with modifications by Lk. Mt still had the older form, the variant of Mk 13:30, before him, in the context of the apocalyptic discourse. But Mt corrects the Markan form in the light of the Q-form by including 18b. Mt keeps 18d, but reinterprets it in a final sense as referring to all that the Law demands (love). This same *traditionsgeschichtliche* explanation can be found in Schweizer's *Das Evangelium nach Matthäus,* 62-65. — Both the philology of Part One and the tradition criticism of Part Two (cf. below) make Schweizer's thesis highly unlikely. Postulating a Markan as well as a Q-form of 5:18 sins against the basic scientific law that the simplest explanation that covers all the data is to be preferred. And Schweizer's theory asks us to suppose that something Lk and Mt have in common in the same logion (Mt 5:18b = Lk 16:17a) is a later addition, while what Mt has alone (5:18d) is original. This turns synoptic source criticism on its head. — Hasler, *Amen,* 55-56, rightly attributes both Mt 5:18 and Lk 16:17 to Q. For evaluation of the work of Berger and Hasler on *Amēn,* cf. Sand, *Gesetz,* 37. — D. Lührmann points out that Mt 5:18-19 are part of a larger form witnessed in Mt, namely, an introductory eschatological thesis (e.g., 5:18) followed by two antithetical conditional statements in the style of *Sätze heiligen Rechtes* (*Die Redaktion der Logienquelle,* 107-117). On the basis of Mt 18:15-18, Lührmann concludes that this *Rahmengattung* is not a pure creation of Mt but goes back to Q^{mt}.

but rather does fix a terminus for the permanence of the Law. (4) *Genētai* most probably refers to the occurrence of prophesied events. (5) It is a bit forced to interpret *panta* as "the law of love," especially in conjunction with *genētai.* (6) The awkward presence of the two *heōs an* clauses in one sentence suggests the possibility of conflation or editing.

Part Two: **Tradition and Redaction of 5:18**

Having determined as far as possible the literal sense of the words in 5:18, we turn now to the larger question of distinguishing between pre-Matthean tradition and Matthean redaction and of determining whether the Matthean redaction confirms our view on salvation-history and Law in Mt.

First, for the sake of convenience, let us present the verse divided into its four parts:

Mt 5:18a. *Amēn gar legō hymin*
b. *heōs an parelthē|i ho ouranos kai hē gē*
c. *iōta hen ē mia keraia ou mē parelthē|i apo tou nomou*
d. *heōs an panta genētai.*[45]

As we have already noted, vs. 18 stands out as the only verse in our pericope (5:17-20) that has a clear-cut parallel, namely Lk 16:17:

Lk 16:17a. *Eukopōteron de estin ton ouranon kai tēn gēn parelthein*
b. *ē tou nomou mian keraian pesein.*

Despite some doubts, most commentators agree that Mt and Lk are using the same written source (Q) here.[46] Obviously, each formulates the verse to suit his own theological purpose. At first glance, the relative simplicity of Lk argues for his version's being more primitive, at

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[45] Not all commentators divide the verse in the same way: some (like Hasler, *Amen,* 56-57) distinguish only three parts, so that what we call 18d is for them 18c. But most recent writers, such as Schweizer, "Noch einmal Mt 5,17-20," use the four-part division.

[46] For dissent on this point, cf. Lohmeyer, *Das Evangelium des Matthäus,* 104; the divergences that Lohmeyer thought so great do not seem all that weighty when one prunes Mt 5:18 of the obvious editorial additions and takes into account the theology that is governing Mt and Lk in their choice of phraseology. H.-T. Wrege, *Die Überlieferungsgeschichte der Bergpredigt* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1968) 40, following Jeremias, tries to dispense with the Q-document and explain Mt 5:18 and all the parallels between Mt's Sermon on the Mount and Lukan material by oral tradition. The forced nature of some of his argumentation is his best refutation. Kilpatrick, *Origins,* 17-18, and Sand, *Gesetz,* 36, represent the majority opinion in defending the Q-origin of the logion. Curiously, F. Beare, "The Sayings of Jesus in the Gospel According to St. Matthew," *Studia Evangelica IV* (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1968) 152, places 5:18 in the material peculiar to Mt.

least vis-à-vis the whole of Mt 5:18 with its four clauses.[47] But a closer inspection will force us to modify that judgment.

Mt 5:18a seems to be an introductory formula added by Mt. As we pointed out in Part One, some form of *Amēn legō* appears in Mt 31×, as opposed to 13× in Mk and 6× in Lk; but only Mt uses the formula with *gar* after *Amēn*. Mk comes close to this usage, but in only one case, Mk 14:9: *Amēn de legō hymin*. Since the *gar* seems to be a Matthean stylistic peculiarity embedded in an introductory formula — an introductory formula lacking in the Lukan parallel — it seems best to assign the whole of 5:18a to Matthean redaction.[48]

When we come to the body of the verse, we notice that it contains a clumsy repetition: 18b and 18d are both dependent temporal clauses beginning with *heōs an* followed by the aorist subjunctive. Lohmeyer suggested a conflation of two different forms of the same verse (basically 18bc joined to 18cd), but both the Lukan parallel and, as we shall see, Mt's imitation of the language of the eschatological discourse (Mt 24 = Mk 13) argue instead that Mt carefully added 18d for his own theological purpose.[49]

We are left then with Mt 5:18bc and Lk 16:17 as two different adaptations of an earlier Q-logion (mediated through two different versions of Q?):

Mt 5:18b.	*heōs an parelthēi ho ouranos kai hē gē*	Lk 16:17a.	*Eukopōteron de estin ton ouranon kai tēn gēn parelthein*
18c.	*iōta hen ē mia keraia ou mē parelthēi apo tou nomou.*	17b.	*ē tou nomou mian keraian pesein.*

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[47] So, with many others, Banks, "Matthew's Understanding," 234; P. Pokorný, *Der Kern der Bergpredigt* (Hamburg: Evangelische Verlag, 1969) 41.

[48] This view is opposed by Joachim Jeremias, "Kennzeichen der ipsissima vox Jesu," *Abba* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1966) 145-152, especially 150-151; but Jeremias is rightly opposed by Trilling, *Israel*, 169 n. 12, and Banks, "Matthew's Understanding," 233 n. 23. Banks sees the *Amēn*-formula as heightening the Christological factor in a saying related to the Law. Hasler, *Amen*, 57, suggests Mt may have taken the *gar* in 5:18a from Q. But the presence of *Amēn gar legō hymin* in Mt alone argues against such a hypothesis. Schulz, *Q. Die Spruchquelle*, 114, says 5:18a could have come from Mt's redaction or from Q. But he then proceeds to take for granted that 5:18a did stand in the earliest stratum of Q.

[49] But cf. Lohmeyer, *Das Evangelium des Matthäus*, 108. Grundmann, *Das Evangelium nach Matthäus*, 147, rightly sees 18d as coming from Mt; so, too, Dupont, *Les Béatitudes* I, 134, who notes that 18d views the whole of Scripture as a collection of prophecies. For a somewhat different view of the composition of 5:18, cf. G. Bornkamm, "Wandlungen im alt- und neutestamentlichen Gesetzesverständnis," *Geschichte und Glaube II* (Munich: Kaiser, 1971) 73-119.

The basic saying is an affirmation of the perduring validity of the Law — in all its parts and in its smallest details — either forever or till the end of this aeon. Neither Mt nor Lk could accept such a blanket statement without modification. But how can we trace the exact editorial modifications of each writer? As a working hypothesis, let us suppose that Mt 5:18bc, being the most stringent form of the statement we can isolate, and containing as it does a chiasm obscured by both Mt and Lk, reflects the most primitive form of the logion available to us.[50] Lk has changed the statement to do away with any explicit affirmation of how long the Law's validity will endure and whether or not there is a temporal terminus to the Law's validity. In Lk, all temporal connection between the passing away of heaven and earth and the falling away of the *keraia,* (i.e., the passing of any part of the Mosaic Law) is dissolved.[51] Instead, there is a *comparison* between two events that could come to pass only with the greatest difficulty: the passing of heaven and earth and the falling away of the *keraia.* Now, like Mt, Lk in 21:33 takes over Mk 13:31 almost word-for-word: *ho ouranos kai hē gē pareleusontai, hoi de logoi mou ou (mē) pareleusontai.*[52] In 16:17, then, Lk is not describing an impossible event when he speaks of the passing of heaven and earth, but one that will most certainly take place, though with great eschatological travail. The same is true of the passing of the Law. It is not an impossible event (the very next verse, 16:18, makes that quite plain as regards divorce), but one that will come with effort, struggle, opposition, and violence. This idea fits the Lukan context well: the Pharisees have just laughed

[50] Strange to say, it is sometimes affirmed that Lk has the more stringent affirmation of the Law's perduring validity; so, e.g., Schweizer, *Das Evangelium nach Matthäus,* 62. But, strictly speaking, Lk does not say anything about how long the Law will last and whether or not there is a terminus to its validity. The statement, taken in itself, is a comparison of the difficulty involved in the occurrence of two different events; so, rightly, Banks, "Matthew's Understanding," 234. Unfortunately, Banks does not see the great difference between Lk and Mt on this point. Likewise, E. Hirsch, *Frühgeschichte des Evangeliums* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1941) II, 66, grasps the meaning of the Lukan form quite well but groans in despair over the perversion of the logion by Mt. — The idea that Lk, of all the synoptists, would be the one to preserve the more stringent statement on the whole Law's perduring validity is *a priori* difficult to accept. Schulz, *Q. Die Spruchquelle,* 114, has a good treatment of Lk's refashioning of the primitive logion.

[51] Note Lk's redactional activity in 17b: a repetitious *parelthein,* which perhaps has its *Sitz* in semitic catechesis, is avoided by the substitution of *pesein,* thus making for better Greek style. The *iōta,* which is not especially smaller than other Greek letters in Greek majuscule script, is omitted, while the *keraia,* which could mean in Greek a stroke or metaphorically an insignificant thing, is kept. The fact that the majuscule *iōta* was not a paradigm of smallness is missed by Banks, "Matthew's Understanding," 234 n. 24.

[52] We put in the proviso "almost" word-for-word, since the better reading of Mk 13:31 seems to be *ou pareleusontai* (omitting the *mē* of most manuscripts in favor of B D [original hand]), while the better reading of Lk 21:33 has *ou mē.* Mt 24:35 agrees with Lk in including the *mē,* but goes its own way in substituting the singular number of the verb in the first clause and the subjunctive aorist *parelthō-sin* for the future in the second clause (with no difference in meaning). As the critical apparatus shows, various harmonizations were attempted in the manuscripts.

at Jesus (16:14) and Jesus replies with a withering denunciation of the Pharisees, pointing out that God's judgment inverts man's judgment (16:15). The Law and the prophets are said to last up until the Baptist (16:16a); and, whatever 16:16b means,[53] the preaching of the Kingdom that now begins is connected with violence. Thus the whole passage is marked by notes of struggle, change, opposition, and violence that confront or accompany the preaching of Jesus. Lk is expressing his redactional viewpoint perfectly when he compares the difficulty of the passing of the Mosaic Law in the face of such hostility to the catastrophic passing of heaven and earth.[54] He continues the theme of opposition and tribulation from the side of the Jews in Acts, especially in the "liberal" preaching of Stephen and Paul.

We suggest, then, that Mt 5:18bc represents a more stringent and more primitive form of the saying. But just how stringent is the saying? Vs. 18bc, taken by itself, does allow two different interpretations, as we saw in Part One. On the one hand, "till heaven and earth pass away" could be just an idiomatic expression for "never."[55] The emphasis would not be on the *heōs*-idea of terminus, but on the main affirmation: the Law shall not pass away. On the other hand, we also saw that the passing of heaven and earth at the end of this age was a recurrent idea in the OT and Jewish thought. Mt quite obviously shares such an idea, since he, like Lk, takes over Mk 13:31 almost word-for-word in Mt 24:35. We also saw that in Jewish thought the passing of the

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[53] To go into the endless discussions would take us too far afield; besides the Lukan commentaries, cf. F. Danker, "Luke 16:16 — an Opposition Logion," *JBL* 77 (1958) 231-243; also, Sand, *Gesetz*, 178-182.

[54] Conzelmann, *Die Mitte der Zeit*, 150, thinks that Lk does not want to indicate a break here. But, granted that Lk holds that *nomos* is a part of Scripture and so a part of the Christian heritage, and that many moral injunctions of the Mosaic Law pass over into Christianity, still the sense of Lk 16:17 in context seems to be one of a violent break rather than one of peaceful transition. As we can see from Acts, Lk knew very well that more than one *keraia* of the Law was to fall when the gospel was preached to the Gentiles. Thus, we would be diametrically opposed to Conzelmann's view that by adding 16:17 to 16:16, Lk changed a possible reference to a break. It seems strange that, if Lk's editorial purpose at this point was to stress continuity, he should have followed 16:17 by a glaring contradiction to the Mosaic Law (16:18 on divorce). Banks, "Matthew's Understanding," 236, misses this point, although he too opposes Conzelmann's interpretation of Lk 16:16-17 (cf. p. 237 n. 36). Dupont likewise misses the editorial purpose of Lk when he calls 16:16-18 a small erratic block, without any connection with its context (*Les Béatitudes* I, 113). T. W. Manson, in *The Sayings of Jesus* (London: SCM, 1971) 135, perceives the true sense of Lk 16:16-18, but fails to see the real meaning of the redactional form of Mt 5:18. — Danker, "Luke 16:16 — an Opposition Logion," tries to interpret the Lukan context 16:14-18 by supposing that 16:16 represents the objections of the Pharisees. Not only is this forced, but it also leaves unexplained the strange juxtaposition of 16:17 and 16:18.

[55] This is the interpretation of a large number of commentators; cf. n. 27 and n. 28 of this chapter. But Schulz, *Q. Die Spruchquelle*, 115-116, argues that even the earliest stratum of Q understood the logion in terms of an apocalyptic limit on the Law.

Law in the age to come — at least in some of its parts — was not unheard of, though it was not the common teaching. Consequently, even in a Jewish-Christian milieu, 18bc could mean *either* that the Law will never pass *or* that the Law will pass only at the end of this aeon. As for Mt himself, one has only to put Mt 5:18bc back-to-back with Mt 24:35, to decide what 18bc meant for Mt, the author of the gospel:

5:18b.	*heōs an parelthēi ho ouranos kai hē gē*	24:35a.	*ho ouranos kai hē gē pareleusetai*
18c.	*iōta hen ē mia keraia ou mē parelthēi apo tou nomou*	35b.	*hoi de logoi mou ou mē parelthōsin*

From 24:35a it is clear that, for Mt, the passing of heaven and earth is a certain future event predicted by Jesus. The difference in the two statements is that, while in 24:35 this certain passing away is opposed (*de*) to the certain permanence of Jesus' words, in 5:18 the certain passing away of heaven and earth becomes the time limit, up to which the most insignificant parts of the Law will maintain their force. A time limit to the Law is definitely set. This might surprise us if we had not already seen that Mt had set a time limit (the death and resurrection of Jesus) for the restricted ministry to the land and people of Israel. Time limits for various periods of salvation-history are not alien to Mt's thought patterns.[56]

Mt, therefore, would have understood the primitive form of 18bc as an affirmation of the Law's validity within a limited time period. But what time period? Here lay a difficulty for Mt. As we have seen, Mt considers such important prescriptions as circumcision to have fallen after the death-resurrection. Yet, as it is plain from Mt 24:35 read in the context of the eschatological discourse, the passing of heaven and earth per se refers to the catastrophic events in the cosmos at the end of human history. How is Mt to bring the time limit of 18b into harmony with his view of when the Law (at least in some important parts) passes away? He does this by adding 18d: *heōs an panta genētai.* The meaning of 18d may at first seem discouragingly vague, but a quick look at Greek and Matthean usage makes its sense less obscure. As we saw in Part One, there is no basis in Mt — little outside Mt in the

[56] Cf. Chapter II of this thesis. R. Hamerton-Kelly, "Attitudes to the Law in Matthew's Gospel: A Discussion of Matthew 5:18," *BR* 17 (1972) 19-32, clearly sees the element of the time limit. But he dismisses too quickly the reference to the cross. He rightly sees a reference to the resurrection as an eschatological event, but his own attempt to make 18d refer to the report of the guards at the tomb is more ingenious than convincing. For another view that comes close to ours, cf. Berger, *Die Gesetzesauslegung Jesu* I, 20; but the phrase, "ein ungerechtes Gesetz," does not reflect the mind of Mt correctly.

NT — for taking *ginomai* to refer to a "doing" or "obeying" of the (whole) Law, i.e., Law as a whole body or system, not just as individual commands. The basic sense of *ginomai* (in Mt at least) is the occurrence of an event ("something happened"), and certain of the RZ show us how Mt used it in his own material for the fulfillment of events predicted by the prophets (1:22: *touto de holon gegonen hina plērōthēi*; 21:4: *touto de gegonen hina plērōthēi*; 26:54+56: *pōs oun plērōthōsin hai graphai hoti houtōs dei genesthai ... touto de holon gegonen hina plērōthōsin hai graphai tōn prophētōn*).[57] The last example is especially instructive, since it represents Mt's redactional expansion of Mk's laconic *all'hina plērōthōsin hai graphai* and serves as the rubric for the whole of the Matthean Passion Narrative (in which, with the exception of the Judas story, there are no RZ). Mt's emphasis on the *graphai* as the *graphai tōn prophētōn* is notable in the light of his redactional activity elsewhere (e.g., RZ, 11:13 — and 5:17!).

We have seen that the use of *ginomai* to denote the coming to pass of a prophesied event is definitely a characteristic of Matthean redaction and theology. This is further confirmed by the apocalyptic discourse, this time in the verse just before 24:35. Mt certainly seems to have had his eyes on 24:34-35 when he was working on 5:18. In fact, it would not be saying too much to affirm that 5:18 is a Q-logion reworked and reinterpreted by Mt's insertion of material from the Markan eschatological discourse. The resemblance in both structure and language between Mt 5:18acd and Mt 24:34 (=Mk 13:30) is striking.

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[57] So Schweizer, "Matth. 5, 17-20 — Anmerkungen," 481, but with a different overall approach to the meaning of 5:17-20 (Jesus as the bearer and fulfiller of the eschatological command of love). Closer to our approach would be O. Hanssen, "Zum Verständnis der Bergpredigt," in *Der Ruf Jesu und die Antwort der Gemeinde* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1970) 94-111, especially 104-110. On p. 106, Hanssen points out the apocalyptic usage of *ginesthai* in a context of the realization of a prophesied event belonging to God's secret plan for the world: cf. Dan 2:28-29; Apoc 1:1, 19; 4:1; 22:6. Hanssen also points out the connection of *ginesthai* with the Reflexionszitate and *plēroun*, and the impossibility of referring *panta* in 5:18d to *nomos*. But his attempt to refer 18d to the life of love in the church imports into 18d an idea that is simply not there. Rather, the reference seems to be to the death-resurrection as the culmination of the fulfillment of all prophecy. Sand, *Gesetz*, 153-154, also notes how Mt's redactional activity in 26:56 has connections with 1:22 and 21:4f; he then proceeds: "...für Matthäus ist die Passion nicht Erfüllung einer einzelnen Prophetenstelle oder der Schrift ganz allgemein, sondern der prophetischen Schriften insgesamt." Exactly: *heōs an panta genētai!* — In general, we might point out that trying to make 18d mean "until all the commands [at least ethical commands — cf. S. Schulz] of the Law are realized in the life of Jesus and the Church" runs counter to the fact that Jesus is about to abrogate (not realize!) the *ethical* commands concerning divorce, oaths, and talion (antitheses 3, 4, and 5). On this, see Chapter IV. Rothfuchs, *Erfüllungszitate*, 50, gives an excellent summary of non-canonical apocalyptic works which demonstrate the apocalyptic meaning of 5:18d; but Rothfuchs opts for Schweizer's solution in the Matthean redaction.

5:18a. *Amēn gar legō hymin*	24:34a. *Amēn legō hymin hoti*
18c. *iōta hen ē mia keraia ou mē parelthēi apo tou nomou*	34b. *ou mē parelthēi hē genea hautē*
18d. *heōs an panta genētai*	34c. *heōs an panta tauta genētai*

The comparison is instructive on a number of grounds. First of all, Mt 24:34 shows us an example of *ou mē* and *parelthēi ... heōs an panta tauta genētai* that certainly does not mean "this will never happen." On the contrary, the certainty of this generation's passing away is taken for granted; the emphasis is rather on *what* forms the time limit. And from the context of the eschatological discourse, it seems clear that *heōs an panta tauta genētai* refers to the fulfillment of prophesied events in an apocalyptic context.[58]

From all this, it seems clear that Mt's addition of 18d in 5:18 — taken perhaps quite consciously from 24:34c (=Mk 13:30c) — bears the idea of the fulfillment of prophecy (in an apocalyptic context) as the time limit of the Law. The most insignificant part of the Law will not lose its binding force until all things prophesied come to pass in the eschatological event. Note, however, a difference in context between 24:34c and 5:18d. Vs. 24:34 lies at the end of the eschatological discourse (at least in the earlier Markan form). The prophecies referred to in 24:34 are both OT prophecies and the words of Jesus, prophesying *inter alia* the destruction of Jerusalem, the time of tribulation, and the coming of the Son of Man in power and glory. The context of 5:18 is not quite the same. The only prophecies mentioned up until ch. 5 are the OT prophecies which map out the "life of Jesus" (in keeping with Mt's "historicizing" interest in "facts" predicted and realized). In fact, Mt uses the RZ only for the earthly life of Jesus, never for his second coming and the final judgment. As is well known, the prophecies in the RZ are introduced by a fulfillment formula, and specifically in the very first example (1:22) by *touto de holon gegonen hina plērōthēi* (note the connection of *ginomai* and *plēroō*, a connection seen in 5:17-18). A person reading Mt in the order in which it is written would naturally suppose that 5:18d referred to the OT prophecies which are fulfilled

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[58] This clear parallel to 5:18d makes very dubious Banks' attempt to understand *panta* as referring to "the demands of the Law" ("Matthew's Understanding," 236). Actually, what Banks says about the demands of the Law being signs which anticipate that which has now appeared in the teaching of Jesus is very true, but such a statement does not render the meaning of the Greek words in 5:18d. — It may just be possible that Mt dropped the *tauta* when he transferred 24:34c to 5:18 precisely because, in the context of 5:18, *tauta* would refer to the yod and tittle of the Law — a reference Mt did not want in 5:18d; cf. Mt 19:20.

in the entire (*panta!*) career of Jesus. Taking 18d with 18b+c, we have the following train of thought: the most insignificant parts of the Law will retain their validity (18c) up until a certain eschatological time limit in salvation-history (18b). The time limit in the primitive, stringent Jewish-Christian logion (18b+c) was probably the apocalyptic event of the passing of the old heaven and earth at the end of time. By adding 18d, Mt has reinterpreted this eschatological event as the entire career of Jesus, culminating in his death-resurrection (cf. the whole argumentation of Chapter II).[59] The death-resurrection of Jesus is *die Wende der Zeit*, the turning point between the old and the new aeon. Before this eschatological event Jesus restricted himself to the people and land of Israel and showed himself faithful in principle to the Mosaic Law. After the prophecies pointing to the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus had all been fulfilled, the exalted Son of Man proclaims a universal mission that dispenses with circumcision. The new heavens and the new earth have come. The binding force of the Mosaic Law as an inviolable whole and *qua* Mosaic has passed with the passing of the old creation.

An objection that is sometimes raised to this approach is that 18d becomes just a tautological phrase, since 18b has already made reference to the eschatological event.[60] It is true that both *heōs an* clauses refer to eschatological events as some sort of terminus to the validity of the Mosaic Law, but the precise content differs radically in each of the two clauses. Vs. 18b expresses the limiting eschatological event in traditional apocalyptic language; and, if there were no 18d, we would take it at its face value, namely as a reference to the complete end of all human history. Vs. 18d reinterprets the apocalyptic language of 18b in terms of the fulfillment of all prophecy in Christ (culminating in his death-resurrection). In short, 18d says that 18b takes place at the death-resurrection of Jesus, which is the fulfillment of OT prophecies;

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[59] One of the weaknesses of Banks' presentation in "Matthew's Understanding" is precisely that he does not have a conception of Mt's view of salvation-history, in the context of which he might interpret 5:18 correctly. Many of Banks' objections to views similar to ours (cf. p. 235 n. 34 of his article) would have been obviated if he had first undertaken a study of Mt's schema of salvation-history. For other objections to our view, cf. C. Carlston, "The Things That Defile (Mark VII. 14) and the Law in Matthew and Mark," *NTS* 15 (1968-69) 75-96, especially 78 n. 5. But Carlston misunderstands the function of 5:18.

[60] So, following others, Strecker, *Weg*, 143; Wrege, *Die Überlieferungsgeschichte*, 38. Hasler, *Amen*, 57, does claim that 5:18b and 5:18d are identical in meaning: both refer to the events of the end-time, especially the parousia. Hasler thus leaves us wondering why Mt took pains to say the same thing twice in the same verse with two redundant *heōs an* clauses. More to the point is the comment of R. Lenski, *The Interpretation of St. Matthew's Gospel* (Columbus: Wartburg, 1943) 209: "The first protasis with *heōs an* indicates only the time... parallel with this, the second protasis with *heōs an* advances from the time to what shall occur during this time." But Lenski's subsequent exegesis on pp. 209-210 does not reflect adequately Matthean thought.

vs. 18b says that 18d is the apocalyptic event ushering in the new aeon. The two clauses have a reciprocal relationship. They mutually interpret each other and are certainly not tautological.

We conclude, then, that the *redactional* form of Mt 5:18 is not a stringent affirmation of the perduring validity of the Mosaic Law for all time. Rather, by his redactional activity, Mt has adapted an originally stringent saying on the Law to his own "economy" of salvation-history. The Mosaic Law as a whole and *qua* Mosaic lasts up until the apocalyptic event of the death-resurrection of Jesus. After this *Wende der Zeit*, the norm for the disciple is "all whatsoever I commanded you" (Mt 28:19). The commandments given by Jesus during the unique past period of his public ministry (aorist: *eneteilamēn*) must be the continuing norm for the ongoing life of the church (present participle + present infinitive: *didaskontes autous tērein*). If we may anticipate our findings a bit: when we take a look at what precisely Jesus commanded during his earthly ministry, we find out that sometimes it affirmed and deepened the Mosaic Law (antitheses 1, 2, and 6), sometimes it rescinded the Mosaic Law (antitheses 3, 4, and 5), and sometimes it enjoined observances totally outside the Mosaic Law (e.g., the eucharist). What is ultimately normative for the disciple is not the command of Moses but the word of Jesus. That word may or may not coincide with the command of Moses, but its normative value in any case comes from its being the word of Jesus.

With this understanding of the key verse 5:18, we are now in a much better position to step back and try to understand Mt's thought in 5:17.

SECTION B: Mt 5:17

Part One: **Philological and Historical Data for Mt 5:17**

Mē nomisēte. The verb has its usual meaning in NT Greek: "think," "believe," "consider." The meaning of "use customarily," "have in common use," while perfectly possible in koine, does not appear in the NT (except in the unlikely reading of the *textus receptus* of Acts 16:13). Mt is the only NT writer who has *me nomisēte* as a preface to an *ēlthon*-word (5:17 and 10:34), and so the initial negative verb may come from his hand (cf. below on *ēlthon*).

Nomisēte is the aorist subjunctive and therefore does not lend itself to the idea that Jesus supposed these thoughts to be already in the minds of either the scribes and the Pharisees or the disciples. The sense is not "stop thinking" (which would demand a present imperative) but "do not begin to think," "do not let it even enter your minds that."

Taking together the fact that *mē nomisēte* might express just redactional emphasis and the fact that it does not presuppose the thought as already present, we may wonder whether a definite audience (Pharisees? disciples?) is envisaged. Mt's redaction does invite us to seek a definite group: he begins with the second person plural in 5:11f, carries it through 5:13ff, repeats it in 5:17 and 5:20, and keeps it in the basic pattern of the antitheses (you have heard it said ... but I say to you). If, then, we do seek a precise group to whom the admonition of 5:17 is directly addressed, Mt's redaction of the Sermon would suggest the disciples (5:1, *mathētai;* 5:3-12, beatitudes addressed to the disciples exposed to persecution [especially vss. 10-12]; 5:13-16, the disciples as salt and light, meant to witness before the larger group of men in general). In Mt's mind, the teaching of 5:17-20 is not primarily a defense against the objections of the Pharisees, but rather an explanation and warning to the disciples.[61] The latter are about to hear the radical teaching of the antitheses. The direct opposition between old and new, the sweeping revocation of three important institutions of the Mosaic Law (divorce, oaths, talion), the daring claim of Jesus that he can effectively stand in the place of Yahweh on Sinai, all this could easily lead to the mistaken notion that moral law and sanctions were being totally rescinded. While Mt is no Judaizing legalist, he is passionately concerned about the ethical life of the disciples who have the stringent obligation to *do* the will of the Father. So Mt places 5:17 first in the programmatic statement on the Law in order to avoid any misconceptions about what the antitheses are saying. As we shall see, though, Mt attempts in 5:17-20 to give not only a warning but also some positive explanation of *what* is happening in the eschatological teaching of Jesus and *why*.

Ēlthon. The main verb gives its name to the form-critical designation of 5:17: programmatic-eschatological *ēlthon*-word.[62] This may seem

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[61] Bornkamm, "Wandlungen," in n. 3 on pp. 74-75, stresses that *mē nomisēte* is not just a rhetorical device (*contra* Trilling, *Israel,* 172); Banks, "Matthew's Understanding," 226, shares Trilling's view: the negative introduction is not seen as reflecting a misunderstanding on the part of Jesus' disciples or opponents. Note that we hold that, while the verb refers to a concrete audience, the prohibition refers to a possible, not a present, misunderstanding. — Hummel, *Auseinandersetzung,* 68, sees a reference to antinomians (similarly, Barth, "Gesetzesverständnis," 69, 149, and Carlston, "The Things That Defile," 81 n. 1 and n. 3). But, as a number of recent critics have pointed out (Strecker, *Weg,* 137 n. 4; Walker, *Heilsgeschichte,* 134-135; Schweizer, "Observance of the Law," 216 n. 2; also his "Christus und Gemeinde im Matthäusevangelium," 45 n. 171; Sand, "Die Polemik," 112-125; Bornkamm, "Wandlungen," 75 n. 6; C.F.D. Moule, "St. Matthew's Gospel: Some Neglected Features," *Studia Evangelica II,* 91-99, especially 93), there is no solid proof of an antinomian front in Mt.

[62] The great forerunner of present-day research on this subject was A. von Harnack. In his essay, "'Ich bin gekommen.' Die ausdrücklichen Selbstzeugnisse Jesu über den Zweck seiner Sendung und seines Kommens," *ZTK* 22 (1912) 1-30, von Harnack notes that "to come" need not have a Messianic sense even in the NT. But he also states that there is a series of sayings of Jesus introduced by such phrases as, "I have (not) come," "I was sent," which give the purpose of his coming. These

a rather strange *Gattung* until we realize that in the gospels there is a whole series of statements by Jesus which describe his eschatological, messianic mission and purpose with the verb *erchesthai* and some phrase or clause expressing purpose.[63] We can isolate in the NT traditions seven forms of the basic *ēlthon*-word. All these forms, with one exception, are found in the gospels. (1) The "pure" form of the *ēlthon*-word is *ēlthon* + the infinitive of purpose: always in the mouth of Jesus, in the first person singular aorist indicative, with an infinitive following, often with a dialectical *ouk ... alla.* The Markan tradition has one example: Mk 2:17 (with a dialectical note: the purpose is to call not the just but the sinners). The parallels are Mt 9:13 and Lk 5:32 (but Lk changes the main verb to the perfect *elēlutha*). There are no clear examples of the pure form in Q, unless Mt 10:34-35 comes from the same source as Lk 12:49. This is quite possible, since Mt and Lk produce Q-material in the corre-

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"programmatic sayings," which according to von Harnack express the divinely given mission of Jesus, tend to increase in the synoptic tradition. He counts eight of them in the synoptics. Working very much on the level of the *Sitz im Leben Jesu,* von Harnack thinks 5:17 is authentic (i.e., actually spoken by Jesus), since its "lapidary" programmatic character did from the beginning "embarrass" the church. In this saying, Jesus, the giver of the antitheses, shows he is no revolutionary come to annul the Law and the prophets. Taken all together, the "Ich bin gekommen" statements show that Jesus was conscious of himself as a redeemer and law giver with a divinely given mission. In another article, "Geschichte eines programmatischen Wortes Jesu (Matth. 5,17) in der ältesten Kirche," *Sitzungsberichte der Königlich Preussischen Akademie der Wissenschaften* (Berlin: Verlag der Kgl. Preuss. Akad. Wissen., 1912) 184-207, von Harnack suggests that Lk also knew Mt 5:17, but took over only 5:18. This latter article gives a good history of the interpretation of 5:17 in the early church. — J. Schneider, "erchomai," *TDNT* II, 668, cautions (*contra* Bultmann) against taking for granted that these *ēlthon*-words are necessarily creations of the community. Bultmann, *Geschichte,* 164-167, argues that in general the "Ich Worte" that speak of Jesus' coming are creations of the community. But he does allow that some may go back to Aramaic logia, and that in Aramaic the word for *ēlthon* might mean "I come," "I am here." He admits this could be true of 5:17, though he persists in thinking that it came from the primitive community (p. 167). As he admits, he cannot prove that some of these *ēlthon*-words do not go back to Jesus, but the secondary character of some of the *ēlthon*-words makes him skeptical about all of them (p. 168). O. Michel, "'Ich komme' (Jos. Bell. III, 400)," *TZ* 24 (1968) 123-124, points out that Josephus (in the passage in *The Jewish Wars* cited in the title) announces his prophetic oracle with *hēkō.* Michel suggests that the idea here is that, in the encounter between the prophet and his audience, the prophetic oracle has already begun to be realized. G. Theissen, in the fourth edition of the *Ergänzungsheft* to Bultmann's *Geschichte* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1971) 62, takes up this suggestion and states: "Möglicherweise hätte alle *ēlthon*-Sprüche im Präsens gestanden." Joachim Jeremias stresses the present meaning of the supposedly original Aramaic verbs ("I come," "I am here") to defend his view that Jesus did speak 5:17; cf. his *New Testament Theology* (London: SCM, 1971) I, 83. The underlying *ʾatayit* can mean "I am there," "I will," "it is my task." Strange to say, Banks, "Matthew's Understanding," 226, while maintaining that Jesus spoke 5:17, allows that the *ēlthon* may be redactional. He states, however, that it is difficult to be certain because the material for comparison is so slight.

[63] Cf. Trilling, *Israel,* 171-172 (we refer here to the third edition; the conclusions concerning 5:17 are slightly different from those of the first edition, the one notable change being the explanation of the connection between vs. 17 and vs. 18).

sponding pericopes. But the key *ēlthon*-verses do not appear in both Mt and Lk. In Mt's special material, there are three examples: 5:17; 10:34; 10:35. The last example is not dialectical in form. But both 5:17 and 10:34 are. In fact, they are the only two NT examples of the full dialectical form preceded by *mē nomisēte,* and with the *ēlthon* repeated in the second main clause.

Mt 5:17	Mt 10:34
mē nomisēte	*mē nomisēte*
hoti ēlthon katalysai ton nomon ē tous prophētas	*hoti ēlthon balein eirēnēn epi tēn gēn*
ouk ēlthon katalysai	*ouk ēlthon balein eirēnēn*
alla plērōsai	*alla machairan*

Since the only two examples of this expanded "pure" form exist in M, we can probably attribute at least the *mē nomisēte hoti* to Matthean redaction. Finally, in Lk's special material,there is one example, Lk 12:49 (not dialectical). In general, then, Mt has more "pure forms" than Mk or Lk. Out of a total of seven examples (counting parallels), four are in Mt, two in Lk, one in Mk. (2) In the second form, the understood "I" is replaced by *ho huios tou anthrōpou* + *ēlthen* + an infinitive of purpose. The one example (which is dialectical) is Mk 10:45 (= Mt 20:28; no direct Lukan parallel, though cf. Lk 19:10). There is no example from M, and no definite example from Q (Mt 18:11, which corresponds to Lk 19:10, is textually doubtful and probably a later gloss). Besides an occurrence in Lk that is also textually doubtful (Lk 9:56), Lk has one definite example, Lk 19:10 (not dialectical). In all, then, there are three examples, one in each of the synoptists. (3) The third form is *ēlthes* + infinitive, in a question addressed to Jesus. There is really only one example of the form. The devils address the question to Jesus in the pericope of the exorcism of the possessed man in the synagogue (Mk 1:24 = Lk 4:34); Mt has transferred the question to the pericope of the exorcism of the Gadarene demoniac (Mt 8:29, reworking Mk 5:7). These three forms exhaust the most important synoptic material. (4) There is one example equivalent to the second form (with *Christos Iēsous* instead of *ho huios tou anthrōpou*). This occurs outside the synoptic tradition: 1 Tim 1:15, which seems to be a citation from a confessional formula. (5) The fourth gospel does not have the "pure" form or any of its direct derivatives. It has, though, a number of analogous constructions — all with the purpose expressed in some way other than an infinitive of purpose. The purpose can be expressed by a *hina*-clause (Jn 10:10 [dialectical]; 12:47 [dialectical]; 18:37); *eis* + accusative (Jn 9:39); and, more generally, by a noun in apposition (Jn 12:46). We now pass to the two last forms, which are only vaguely connected with the *ēlthon*-words and are included for

the sake of completeness and to point up the eschatological tone of the various *ēlthon*-words. (6) Jesus is called *ho erchomenos* in both the Markan tradition (Mk 11:9 = Mt 21:9 = Lk 19:38; cf. Jn 12:13+15) and in Q (Mt 11:3 = Lk 7:19+20; Mt 23:39 = Lk 13:35). (7) Two other eschatological figures are spoken of in terms reminiscent of the *ēlthon*-words: Elijah (Mk 15:36 — *erchetai* + infinitive of purpose, cf. Mt 27:49) and the Baptist (Mt 21:32 — *ēlthen*).

What does this investigation contribute to 5:17? We can say at the very least that for the first verse of his programmatic statement on the Law, Mt chose a precise form, apt for his purpose, from among the logia of Jesus. From all the examples of "I have come" or "the Son of Man has come" in the synoptic tradition (i.e., forms No. 1 and No. 2), it seems clear that an *ēlthon*-word describes the mission of the eschatological figure whose action will bring about the startling denouement of salvation-history. His eschatological mission will be startling because it will embody the great eschatological reversal, the turning-inside-out and upside-down of all human expectations. This is what the dialectical nature of many *ēlthon*-words expresses. The eschatological figure, contrary to human preconceptions, comes to invite to his banquet *not* the self-righteous but the self-confessed sinner (like Levi/Matthew sharing his banquet with Jesus). He comes to bring not peace but the sword (in other words, division where the ancient world most expected unity and loyalty: the family). He has come *not* to be served but to serve. He has come to save precisely what men considered hopelessly lost (e.g., Zacchaeus). (Similar cases are found in 1 Tim 1:15 and Jn 12:47.) Inherent in the *ēlthon*-words seems to be the idea not only of the mission of the eschatological figure but also the eschatological reversal of the expectations men entertain concerning his mission. This function of the *ēlthon*-words suggests why Mt begins his programmatic statement on Law with an *ēlthon*-word. As we have said, the whole unit of 5:17-20 forms an introduction to the antitheses. Taken by themselves, the antitheses could easily and naturally give rise (in the minds of the disciples who form the audience) to the idea that Jesus, this eschatological law-giver and prophet, simply obliterates all previously given revelation, both Law and prophets. It is to reverse this natural human supposition about his eschatological mission that the Matthean Jesus prefixes a clarifying *ēlthon*-word to the antitheses. Despite appearances, despite all the eschatological sharpening and rescinding of the Law that goes on in the antitheses, Jesus' eschatological mission is not to do away with the Law and the prophets, but to give them their eschatological fullness. We would suggest that this is the precise nuance of the *ēlthon*-word with its dialectical infinitives of purpose in 5:17. We might even go so far as to say that the *ēlthon*-word of 5:17 provides a double reversal, that is, a "conservative" reversal of the expectations naturally aroused by the "radical" reversals contained in the antitheses.

Katalyō. In the transitive sense, *katalyō* can mean: (1) throw down (*kata*), detach a stone from a building; (2) destroy, dismantle, demolish, of buildings either literally or figuratively (opposite of *oikodomein*); (3) do away with, abolish, cancel, annul, make invalid, especially in reference to law(s). The third sense, applied to law, is rare in the NT, but is found in 2 Mac 2:22 (*nomous*); 4:11 (*nomimous ... politeias*); 4 Mac 5:33 (*nomon*); 17:9 (*politeia*). These examples with *nomous, nomon,* etc., are instructive. The references are not simply to an abrogation of this or that individual law, but to a total rescinding of Law, with the consequent destruction of the People of God as a separate people.[64] *Katalyō* in 5:17 thus finds its proper parallel in the Maccabean literature, not in other NT uses. Accordingly, there may be a slight difference in nuance between the total destruction of the whole Law in vs. 17 (*katalyō*) and the rescinding of individual commandments in vs. 19 (*lyō*).

Nomos. See what was said above about *nomos* in 5:18. But here the Law occurs in conjunction with "the prophets." The phrase "the Law and the prophets" received an exhaustive study by A. Sand; we refer the reader to his work for a detailed discussion of the phrase in Mt.[65] The Holy Scriptures of the Jews were referred to as a whole by the phrase "the Law [*hattōrâ,* meaning also "instruction", "revelation"] and the prophets [*hannᵉbîʾîm*]." This two-part designation seems to be the older type of division used by the earlier rabbis. But most of the rabbis adopted the tripartite division of "Law, prophets, and the other books," found as early as the grandson's prologue to Ben Sira (*Prologos,* 1-2, 8-10, 23-25). Except for Lk 24:44 (where *psalmoi* occupies the third place), the NT knows only the older division.[66] In the NT, the two-part division occurs ten times: four times in Mt (5:17; 7:12; 11:13; 22:40);[67] once in Lk (16:16 = Mt 11:13; therefore the phrase existed already in Q); once in Jn (1:45,

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[64] This holds true even for 4 Mac 5:33, where, at first glance, the question seems to be simply one of eating forbidden meat. The whole preceding context, especially vss. 20-21 (with the unitive sense of *ho nomos*), shows that much more is at stake.

[65] Sand, *Gesetz,* especially 33-45 and 183-193. The attempt of Frankemölle, *Jahwebund,* 296-297, to define *nomos* in Mt suffers from the fact that neither in these pages nor elsewhere in his book does he give a detailed treatment of 5:18.

[66] Cf. Strack-Billerbeck, *Kommentar* I, 240; Hummel, *Auseinandersetzung,* 133, notes that Mt retains the older, two-part division. Sand, *Gesetz,* 33 n. 5, is mistaken when he quotes Strack-Billerbeck I, 240, to prove that the Talmud knows only the two-part division; Sand apparently read "nur selten" as "nur." — We cannot agree with Berger, *Gesetzesauslegung* I, 208-224, who does not want to refer *nomos* in 5:17 to the first canonical division. He attempts on the basis of Mt 11:13 to deny that any of the Law-and-prophets passages in Mt reflect the usual canonical divisions. Mt 11:13 is indeed important for Mt's understanding of the Law and the prophets, but it does not prove that Mt is not referring to the canon. — The joining of Law with prophets excludes the possibility that Law is being used here in the wider sense of either (1) the whole of Scripture or (2) the whole Law, written and oral (the reference to yod and stroke in 5:18 would also exclude the latter).

[67] Note that Mt 5:17 and 11:13 have in common that they are variant forms of the set phrase, "the Law and the prophets": "the Law or the prophets" (5:17), and "all the prophets and the Law" (11:13).

but not perfectly coordinated); three times in Acts (13:15; 24:14; 28:23); once in Paul (Rom 3:21). Lk also has three times "Moses and the prophets" (16:29; 16:31; 24:27). Even from a quick glance at these passages, we see that the reference to Law and prophets does not always carry the same meaning. Sometimes the idea of ethical norms and exhortation will be paramount (e.g., Mt 7:12; 22:40).[68] Other times, the Law and prophets will be cited for their prophetic value as witnesses to Christ and the eschatological fulfillment he brings (e.g., Mt 11:13; Lk 24:27; so too in his tripartite division, Lk 24:44; Acts 13:15 [given the whole sermon that follows]; 24:14 [?]; 28:23; Rom 3:21). One question we will have to face is whether the ethical or prophetic note is dominant in 5:17.[69] At the very least, "Law and prophets" in 5:17 should not be reduced to Law alone:[70] *plērōsai* and our interpretation of 5:18 warn us against such an unwarranted restriction.

Prophētai. From the connection with *nomon,* it is clear that *prophētas* in 5:17 means the prophetic books and their content and message rather than the individual human authors of the past. In Judaism, the "prophets" include Joshua, Judges, Samuel, Kings (all former prophets), and the literary prophets minus Daniel (latter prophets).[71] Only the Law and the prophets were read during synagogue worship; the third part of the canon, the *kᵉtûbîm,* was not read in public worship (though the psalms were sung during the liturgy). In the first century A.D., the delimitation of the canon was still in flux, especially with regard to the *kᵉtûbîm.* This may be reflected in the NT's preference for the two-part division. But the NT's emphasis on the two-part division may also indicate a conscious attempt to put the prophets on an equal level with the

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[68] Frankemölle, *Jahwebund,* 299-300, goes too far in denying the "normative" or "legal" emphasis in these passages in favor of the prophetic-historical sense. Trilling, *Israel,* 173-174, thinks these two passages refer not to the codified books but to the essential normative content of Scripture. This may well be for 7:12 and 22:40, but does that meaning fit the context of 5:17-18 (not one yod or stroke)?

[69] One point that should be made clear before we begin to discuss *plēroō*: it is exegetically useless to define the action involved in *plēroō* as the realization, actualization, establishment, or execution (*Aufrichtung, Realisierung, Verwirklichung, Durchführung,* etc.) of the complete will of God. Such a vague description can fit either a "normative-legal" or a "prophetic-historical" approach to any given *plēroō*-passage. Since both the Torah and the Christological prophecies express God's will concerning some future human action, the declaration that *plēroō* means the actualization of God's will in no way removes the ambiguity of a given passage. It is interesting to see the same *Aufrichtung*-terminology used by Barth ("Gesetzesverständnis," 64) in a "normative-legal" understanding of 5:17 and by Frankemölle (*Jahwebund,* 389-390) in a "prophetic-historical" understanding.

[70] Sand, *Gesetz,* 186, stresses this point against Windisch, Strecker, and Barth. Yet we may question whether the results of Sand's lengthy examination of prophecy in Mt are really integrated into his interpretation of 5:17-18.

[71] But the designations "former" and "latter" may not have been in use in the first century A.D., and Daniel may not have received its place in the third part of the Hebrew canon (as opposed to the second); cf. O. Eissfeldt, *The Old Testament, an Introduction* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1966) 562-571.

Torah — something foreign to Judaism. For Judaism, the Torah, as the direct expression of God's will which proceeded from God's hand or mouth, was put above all the other sacred books, which were given by the spirit of prophecy. The prophets had value predominantly as the custodians and interpreters of the Torah.[72] Obviously, this could not be true for the NT, in which prophetic fulfillment plays such an important role. In many ways, the exaltation of the prophetic part of the OT canon reaches a high point in Mt. Perhaps the most valuable contribution af Sand's *Das Gesetz und die Propheten* is its emphasis on the importance the prophets have in Mt's theology, especially in his theology of Law. Sand shows how in Mt the Law must be understood in analogy with prophetic interpretation.[73] But the importance of prophets in Mt goes beyond the Law question. Sand holds that Mt presents the destiny of the Baptist, Jesus, and Jesus' disciples in prophetic colors. The Baptist's preaching is related to the prophets' call for conversion in light of the day of judgment (Mt 3:1-12). Jesus sees the Baptist as Elijah, *the* prophet of the end-time (11:2-19). The Baptist has suffered the violent death typical of the martyred prophets (14:1-12); thus the martyred Elijah prophesies even in death the way of martyrdom which the Son of Man is to tread (17:10-13). Jesus himself is seen as a prophet by some of the people (16:14; 21:11; 21:46), though Mt makes clear that this title is not adequate. Jesus himself compares his fate of facing misunderstanding and hostility to the fate of the prophets (Mt 13:57). But Jesus is more than just a prophet. He is, in word and work, the Son of David and Messiah prophesied by the prophets; the *ēlthon*-words are one of the expressions of that truth. That Jesus, in his teaching and works, fulfills the words of the OT prophets is emphatically the point of every one of the RZ, introduced by some form of *hina plērōthēi to rēthen dia tou prophētou* (cf. the observations on *genētai* in 5:18 and on *plēroō* below). Mt is so determined to stress fulfillment of the prophets in the RZ that he even refers a psalm citation to "the prophet" (Mt 13:35 = LXX Ps 77:2); even the untraceable quotation of 2:23 is referred vaguely to "the prophets." Jesus' passion is summed up as the fulfillment of "the writings of the prophets" (Mt 26:56, as opposed to the simple mention of "the writings" in Mk 14:49). A number of Matthean texts, allusions as well as RZ, portray Jesus as the *pais theou* of Isaiah: 3:17; 8:17; 11:5; 12:18ff; 20:28; and 26:67. In his preaching and his action, especially against religious hypocrisy, loveless formalism, and exaggerated emphasis on ritual, Jesus stands in the line of the

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[72] This rabbinic view is sometimes attributed — quite incorrectly — to the final redactor of the gospel; cf. J. Wellhausen, *Das Evangelium Matthaei* (Berlin: Reimer, 1914) 18; and K. Bornhäuser, *Die Bergpredigt* (Gütersloh: Bertelsmann, 1923) 50-51.

[73] For what follows, cf. Sand, *Gesetz*, especially the third part of the book, which deals with prophets and the prophets' fate (pp. 125-167).

great OT prophets who threatened punishment and called for conversion (see, e.g., the comparison with Jonah in 12:39-41; 16:4). Twice in the controversies with the Pharisees (9:13; 12:7), Mt portrays Jesus as cutting through Pharisaic legalism by citing Hos 6:6. But Jesus always remains for Mt more than a prophet; he is the Lord, the Son of God, the Son of Man, the fulfillment prophesied by the prophets. And the disciples of this crucified and risen Lord must follow on his path of prophetic witness and suffering.

We are indebted to Sand for presenting so lucidly the case for the importance of prophets in Mt. But ultimately we must ask what is meant precisely by the statement that Mt understands the Law in the light of the prophets. For Sand, this seems to mean primarily that the prophetic message of mercy and love must serve as the critical principle for interpreting the Law. Freed from the bonds of casuistry and legalism by the moral preaching of the prophets, and brought to perfection by Jesus, the Law can once again proclaim the will of God for man's behavior.[74] We certainly agree that this idea is present in Mt, but we must ask: Does this exhaust Mt's theology of prophets-joined-to-Law? Is there some further insight in Mt's understanding of the Law in analogy with prophecy? We think that our investigation of 5:17-18 will show that there is.

Plēroō (*and Dikaiosynē*). Obviously, the general meaning is "to fill completely," "fulfill." But any attempt to become more specific plunges the exegete into a veritable whirlpool of conflicting interpretations. W. Bauer refuses to fix the exact meaning of the word in 5:17, no doubt in recognition of the innumerable interpretations the word has received. And, despite the fact that some interpretations are diametrically opposed to one another, other meanings or nuances of meanings are so close to one another that the exegete has difficulty knowing when one has passed from one interpretation to another. A good case in point is the catalogue H. Ljungman tries to give; one senses a certain overlapping or shading off of lines of demarcation. According to Ljungman, there are four main traditional interpretations.[75] (1) Zahn interprets the verb to mean: to do what is ordered or to realize what is said. (2) V. Harnack says it means to perfect, even by abrogating, adding, completing, finishing, or drawing out all the conclusions (with an eye to *leʾōsōphē* in the Tractate *Sabbath* 116a-b of the Babylonian Talmud, which seems to echo Mt 5:17).[76] (3) A compromise between the first

[74] Sand, *Gesetz*, 188, 193, and 217.

[75] For what follows, cf. H. Ljungman, *Das Gesetz Erfüllen* (Lund: Gleerup, 1954) 19-36. A similar list, though reduced to three interpretations, can be found in McConnell, *Law and Prophecy*, 14. Another list of interpretations can be found in Banks, "Matthew's Understanding," 229-231.

[76] For a discussion of *Sabbath* 116 a-b, cf. Dalman, *Jesus-Jeschua* (Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1922) 52. Despite the fact that this text is often mentioned in discussions of

and second solutions is offered by Descamps, who sees behind *plēroō* the root-meaning of the Hebrew *mlʾ*: to fill, perfect, realize (in a prophetic context) — but with a new meaning which is *sui generis* because of the Christian reality to which it is applied. The best root-meaning here would be "observe faithfully," but with the special Christian nuance kept in mind. (4) Dalman points to the Hebrew *hēqîm* or *qiyyēm* (Aramaic *qayyēm*), meaning to keep one's oath or promise, to hold to the words of the Law, or to confirm a promise by an event. It is used in parallelism with *mlʾ*. In the Targums the two roots begin to be interchanged. Dalman notes that the opposite of *qayyēm* would be the Hebrew *biṭṭēl* (Aramaic *baṭṭēl*). The LXX, however, translates the root *qûm* in piel by *histanō*; *plēroō* represents the root *mlʾ* in the LXX.[77] But the interchange in the Targums cautions against dogmatism here.

When Ljungman comes to present his own view, he lacks the clear methodology and ability to organize needed to produce a satisfying explanation of *plēroō*. If we might summarize and simplify his rather diffuse remarks: the key-note of 5:17, seen in conjunction with 3:15, is Messianic completeness, fullness, full-making. The fullness, the full-making of the Law, comes only with the Messianic act of Jesus, which Mt 3:15-17 identifies with Jesus' sacrificial death for sinners.[78] Jesus

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5:17, it is not really very useful. The text of *Sabbath* 116 a-b has been disturbed and the translation is disputed. There is no point to explaining the *obscurum* of 5:17 by the *obscurius* of *Sabbath* 116 a-b. And, if it is unwise to use this Talmudic passage to interpret the supposed Jewish-Christian tradition behind Mt, this holds *a fortiori* for a redactor who might be a Gentile. Moreover, Davies judges the text to be late (*Setting*, 419 n. 5); so, too, Branscomb, "Jesus and the Law," 229 n. 23. Joachim Jeremias, *New Testament Theology* I, 83 n. 5 and n. 7, has an excellent discussion of the text; but we cannot agree with his use of the text for the interpretation of Mt 5:17 (n. 7 shows that Jeremias is really not interested in the redactional sense of the verse, but in a hypothetical Aramaic form). For further literature on the subject, cf. Wrege, *Überlieferungsgeschichte*, 37 n. 3.

[77] Many authors reject the idea that *plēroō* is equivalent to *qayyēm* (so, e.g., Wrege, *Überlieferungsgeschichte*, 37) because the LXX never translates *qiyyēm* by *plēroō*. This point is especially weighty if we hold that the evangelist was a Gentile, whose usage should be judged primarily from the LXX rather than from the Aramaic targums. Perhaps the greatest single contribution of Ljungman's book was the challenge given to Dalman's position. — Both C.F.D. Moule, "Fulfilment Words in the New Testament: Use and Abuse," *NTS* 14 (1967-68) 293-320, and L. Hartman, "Scriptural Exegesis in the Gospel of Matthew and the Problem of Communication," in (ed. M. Didier) *L'Evangile selon Matthieu*, 31-52, stress that the NT's way of speaking of fulfillment is rare in Jewish texts of the period. Similarly, B. Metzger, "Formulas Introducing Quotations of Scripture in the New Testament and the Mishnah," *JBL* 70 (1951) 297-307, and Rothfuchs, *Erfüllungszitate*, 18; Rothfuchs has a good summary of Hebrew and Septuagint usage, pp. 44-48. The use of *mlʾ* in the fulfillment pattern in the OT is meager, when compared with the NT usage. Cf. also J. Fitzmyer, "The Use of Explicit Old Testament Quotations in Qumran Literature and in the New Testament," *NTS* 7 (1960-61) 297-333.

[78] Ljungman, *Das Gesetz Erfüllen*, 124. Cf. the critique of Ljungman's work by Dupont, *Les Béatitudes* I, 138 n. 3. But one point of Ljungman that does seem worth pondering is whether the common assumption that *katalyō* and *plēroō* can be reciprocally defined is really justified. This would especially hold true if *katalyō* is

is the eschatological act of God which justifies sinners. We must observe that some of Ljungman's remarks sound more Pauline than Matthean.

We see, then, a basic problem in dealing with *plēroō*. Any short dictionary definition we might give could be interpreted in many varying ways. If, for example, we should define *plēroō* as "to fulfill by deeds," the definition could be applied (with various results) to a prophecy, an obligation, a promise, a law, a demand, a claim (in the NT, this means in practice the will of God), a request, a purpose, a desire, a hope, a duty, fate, or destiny. If we try to narrow down the verb's meaning by opposing it to *katalyō*, we find various authors espousing "do," "carry out," or "bring to full expression," "show forth in its true meaning," or "fill up," "complete."

The best way out of this labyrinth of possibilities is to place the data under the rubric of the regular usage of given authors in given contexts. If we may generalize the usage of non-biblical Greek, the simple idea of "to put a law into practice" is expressed more often by *poiein, phylassein,* or *tērein.* But *plēroō* can also be used in this sense (Liddell & Scott quote Aeschylus, *Agamemnon,* 313: *nomoi ... plēroumenoi*). In the LXX, however, we never find *nomos* or a strict equivalent used with *plēroō* (or *anaplēroō*). In the LXX, days are (ful)filled, hands are filled, the earth is filled, words, desires, and plans are filled, a commission is fulfilled, etc. — but no law is fulfilled; on the other hand, the prophetic word of the Lord is fulfilled. In general, Mt seems to follow LXX usage on this point. In Mt, there is no clear-cut, undisputed case where *plēroō* is used with *nomos, entolē, thelēma, logous,* etc., in the simple sense of do, put into practice, obey. For such ideas, *poiein, tērein,* and *phylassein* are used (for *poiein*: Mt 5:19; 7:12; 7:21; 7:24; 8:9; 12:50; 19:16; 21:6; 21:31; 23:3; 23:23; 26:19; note the many figurative uses of bear fruit, *poiein karpon,* in the sense of doing the commandments, the Father's will, etc.; for *tērein*: 19:17; 23:3; 28:20; for *phylassō*: 19:20).

The Matthean usage is all the more striking in view of the fact that there is one context, and only one context, in the NT in which *plēroō* and its cognates are used in reference to law. This is the Pauline context of the fulfillment of the Law by love of neighbor (Gal 5:14; 6:2; Rom 13:8-10 [perhaps Rom 8:4 belongs here too]).[79] The interesting

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a verb that comes from the tradition while *plēroō* comes from Mt's redaction. Also, if, as some argue, Jesus' fulfillment involves some abrogation as well (cf. the antitheses), then it would be misleading to decide *a priori* that *plēroō* must mean here the exact opposite of *katalyō*; cf. Ljungman, *Das Gesetz Erfüllen,* 11.

[79] But Bauer notes that Gal 5:14 may mean: "the whole Law has found its whole content or its full expression in one word." Schweizer, *Das Evangelium nach Matthäus,* 64, admits *plēroō* in the sense of "do" is rare in Greek-speaking Judaism, though he claims examples can be found in Philo.

point here is that these parenetic contexts have strong connections with the tradition behind Mt 22:34-40 (and to a lesser extent 7:12 and 19:18-19). Yet it is precisely here that the *plēroō*-vocabulary, so rich elsewhere in Mt (e.g., the RZ!) is lacking. On the other hand, Paul, while using *plēroō* in law contexts, never uses the verb in reference to the fulfillment of prophecy. Clearly, Mt's use of *plēroō* should not be too quickly assimilated to Paul's. Mt's usage must be judged on its own merits.

When we turn to those passages where *plēroō* does appear in Mt, the predominant sense of the term is obvious. Out of sixteen occurrences, twelve are found in the RZ (1:22; 2:15, 17, 23; 4:14; 8:17; 12:17; 13:35; 21:4; 26:54+56; 27:9).[80] To these twelve we may also add *anaplēroō*, occurring in Mt 13:14.[81] Of the four other instances of *plēroō*, one, of course, is our passage, 5:17, which, at the very least, has *prophētas* as one of its objects. A second (13:48) has the non-theological meaning of "filling up a net" (though in the parable the reference is to the eschatological consummation). The third example (23:32) occurs in the context of the martyrdom of the prophets. The scribes and the Pharisees are told to "fill up" (*plērōsate*) the measure of your fathers' sins — the same basic metaphor involved in full-filling prophecy (i.e., filling up a vessel with an assigned measure). Thus even outside the RZ, the instances examined have some connection with prophets or eschatological fullness or consummation. No example has had anything to do with doing, obeying, or complying with laws. Even if we were to close our investigation here, and were to grant that the final instance (3:15) is the exception that proves the rule, the linguistic evidence in Mt would be overwhelmingly in favor of the meaning of prophetic fulfillment in 5:17.

But should 3:15 be so easily surrendered as an exception? The exegesis of the passage is hotly disputed, and no one interpretation can claim to be absolutely certain. We do think, however, that a good case can be made for the standard Matthean meaning of *plēroō* even in 3:15.

The great problem in 3:15b (*houtōs gar prepon estin hēmin plērōsai pasan dikaiosynēn*) is that we have two key words whose meanings are disputed: *plērōsai* and *dikaiosynēn*.[82] Regarding *dikaiosynē* in Mt, there

[80] As we have noted already, 26:54+56 do not introduce individual citations, but rather act as the "prophetic rubric" placed over the whole of the passion narrative. But some (like Nepper-Christensen) would exclude 26:54+56 from the enumeration of strict RZ; for the controversies over the exact number of RZ, cf. Nepper-Christensen, *Das Matthäusevangelium*, 139-141. But no matter what labels we use, the importance of 26:54+56 for the RZ and Mt's theology of Christological fulfillment must not be overlooked; cf. McConnell, *Law and Prophecy*, 135; Rothfuchs, *Erfüllungszitate*, 102; Wrege, *Überlieferungsgeschichte*, 36, stresses correctly the connection of the RZ with 5:17: "So lesen sich die 'Reflexionszitate' wie Ausführungen zu dem programmatischen Satz 5,17." The contrary view is held by Bornkamm, "Wandlungen," 75.

[81] Stendahl, *School*, 131-132, wishes to consider Mt 13:14-15 a later interpolation. Gundry, *The Use of the Old Testament*, 116-118, rightly rejects Stendahl's arguments.

[82] For a review of opinions and bibliographical references, cf. O. Eissfeldt, "*Plērōsai pasan dikaiosynēn* in Matthäus 3:15," *ZNW* 61 (1970) 209-215 (but Eissfeldt's

are two main positions. Some recent authors, notably G. Strecker and J. Dupont, have argued strenuously for what we might call a "monochromatic" interpretation of *dikaiosynē* in Mt. In other words, *dikaiosynē* always and everywhere in Mt means one and the same thing: that ethical or moral conduct which is in keeping with God's will.[83] This approach rightly stresses that we must not introduce into Mt Paul's theology of *dikaiosynē*. It is quite true that Mt has too often been read in the light of Paulinism. But to reject this Paulinizing approach is not equivalent to proving that *dikaiosynē* in Mt always means moral conduct. Both Paul and Mt draw upon the OT (especially the prophets and psalms) for their conceptions of *dikaiosynē*. And in the OT, *dikaiosynē* as divine activity and as human behavior can stand side-by-side, with no impression given that we must take an either-or approach in understanding *ṣedeq* and *ṣᵉdāqâ*. For instance, the second part of the book of Isaiah, which often speaks of the saving activity (= justice) of God, can put that concept back to back with man's moral conduct (= justice): e.g., Is 56:1 (where the LXX translates the second mention of *ṣᵉdāqâ* as "mercy"). The either-or approach will not work even in Paul (cf. Rom 6:13, 16, 18, 19, 20, where at least some of the references are to the Christian's moral life and growth after baptism and justification; 2 Cor 9:10: *ta genēmata tēs dikaiosynēs hymōn,* with a positive connotation, unlike Phil 3:9). Since a "monochromatic" use of *dikaiosynē* exists neither in the OT nor in Paul, we may be justly skeptical as we come to the claim that Mt always uses the word in the one and the same sense. Let us examine the data.

Mt uses *dikaiosynē* seven times (3:15; 5:6; 5:10; 5:20; 6:1; 6:33; 21:32). In three cases (5:10: persecuted for the sake of justice; 5:20: unless your justice abounds; 6:1: take care not to do your justice), the meaning of Christian moral conduct is clear. And it should be noted that all three cases refer to disciples of Christ, not to Christ himself. Two other cases seem to refer to God's gift of salvation which man cannot attain by his own efforts. In the beatitudes, those who hunger and thirst for justice will be satisfied (5:6). The passive is the divine passive, and the hungry and thirsty will obviously receive from God the thing they hunger and thirst for, namely justice. Not only do Dupont's attempts to avoid this conclusion fail to convince us; his hesi-

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own solution seems more interested in the *Sitz im Leben Jesu* than in Mt's intention; the parallels of the Temple-tax and the coin of tribute are weak). Cf. also Dupont, *Les Béatitudes* III, 211-384, especially 231-244 for 3:15. While we cannot agree with Dupont on 3:15, 5:6, and 6:33, we must admire his magisterial command of the vast literature on the subject. In many ways, Dupont carries on the work begun by A. Descamps in *Les justes et la justice* (Gembloux: Duculot, 1950), especially 113, 124-131; on p. 113, Descamps gives his well-known "Christian" definition of *plēroun*: "...conserver en transformant, perfectionner en sauvegardant."

[83] Strecker, *Weg,* 149-158 (rather sketchy); Dupont, *Les Béatitudes* III, 211-384 (conclusions on 383-384).

tations in specifying what is the precise meaning of 5:6 seem to indicate some lingering doubts in his own mind. Even clearer is the case of 6:33 ("but seek first the kingdom [of the Father] and his justice, and all these things will be given you besides"). Despite the fact that in Mt the *basileia* becomes a historical reality received not only at the end of time but already within salvation-history (e.g., 12:28; 21:43), no exegete would claim that the Kingdom in Mt is simply to be equated with Christian moral effort or the end result of that effort. The key text of 21:43 states plainly that the Kingdom is a gift from God (*arthēsetai* [divine passive!] *aph' hymōn hē basileia tou theou kai dothēsetai ethnei poiounti tous karpous autēs*). The example of 21:43 (a Matthean insertion into a Markan parable) is especially instructive in that it shows that divine gift (*dothēsetai*) and moral effort (*poiounti karpous*) are in no way opposed in Mt's thought; rather, one naturally includes the other. Coming from 21:43 to 6:33, we see that seeking the Kingdom can hardly mean creating or attaining the Kingdom (the divine gift of eschatological salvation!) by one's own moral effort. This is confirmed by the fact that "seeking the kingdom" is spoken of precisely in a context urging the surrender of all anxiety and effort (6:25-34). This seeking is closely akin to hungering and thirsting after justice (5:6). It is no surprise, then, when *dikaiosynēn* appears next to *basileia* as the co-equal object of the seeking. Trying to make *zēteite* mean two different actions with the two different objects, or trying to demote *dikaiosynē* from direct object to dative of means ("seek the kingdom by practicing justice") does violence to Mt's wording, especially when the justice is specifically designated as *autou* (the Father's!). The conclusion of 6:33 (*kai tauta panta prostethēsetai* [divine passive!] *hymin*) simply confirms the tone of divine gift that permeates the whole verse.

Taking stock, we see Mt has three examples of *dikaiosynē* as moral effort on the part of Christ's disciples (5:10; 5:20; 6:1) and two examples of *dikaiosynē* as eschatological gift (5:6; 6:33).[84] We must admit that, in

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[84] This is basically the position of Feuillet, "Morale ancienne," 123-137, especially 132-133. Dupont's attempt to make 6:33 refer to the Christian's moral conduct (*Béatitudes* III, 289-304) is not successful. Making "his justice" refer to a justice God demands and values, subordinating "justice" to "Kingdom" as road to goal (despite the fact that "justice" is mentioned in second place), side-stepping the gift idea in *prostethēsetai* and its impact on the whole verse — all these maneuvers strike one as very forced. And, in the end, Dupont has to admit that there is a tension between his view of 6:33 and its context, and that he must take "seek" in a more active sense than the pre-Matthean tradition intended. We think the interpretation we have proposed avoids these unnecessary tensions and inconsistencies. But our position has a price: giving up the *a priori* of a monolithic concept of *dikaiosynē* in Mt. Likewise, Dupont's attempt to interpret 5:6 as referring to Christian moral endeavor (pp. 355-383) fails. Both the OT texts he cites and the very metaphor of hungering/being-filled go against him. His attempt to see hungering and thirsting for justice as a metaphor for the practice of Christian justice, while the verb "shall be satisfied" is used absolutely (without any idea of being filled with justice) is extremely forced. —

the sixth instance (21:32: *ēlthen gar Iōannēs pros hymas en hodōi dikaiosynēs*), it is difficult to fix the exact meaning of *dikaiosynē*. Does it refer to the Baptist as a preacher of right conduct, as a doer of right conduct, or even as a major figure in God's plan for salvation? It is hard to choose here, and we cannot really exclude any of these nuances. Both eschatological gift and man's moral effort may come together in 21:32.[85]

We are left with our original problem: What is the meaning of *plērōsai pasan dikaiosynēn* in 3:15, the very first statement Jesus makes in the gospel? It could possibly refer to Jesus as the one who obeys and does the Father's will. The emphasis here would be on the moral conduct of Jesus as an example given to his disciples (*hymin!*), who are also called to practice *dikaiosynē* (5:10; 5:20; 6:1). But immediately we notice some differences. As we have said, all the clear examples of *dikaiosynē* as moral conduct refer only to the disciples, not to their Lord (cf. the *hymōn* in 5:20 and 6:1). And none of these clear examples uses *plērōsai* in reference to the practice of the moral life (5:10: *hoi dediōgmenoi heneken dikaiosynēs;* 5:20: *perisseusēi ... dikaiosynē;* 6:1: *dikaiosynēn ... mē poiein*). It is thus a dubious procedure to assimilate 3:15 to these three cases and to say that Jesus here performs an act of obedience as a moral example to his disciples. Since Mt's use of *plēroō* is so dominated by the idea of fulfillment of OT prophecies, and since the theophany that immediately follows 3:15 (vss. 16-17) alludes to Messianic prophecies (Is 42:1; 44:2; Ps 2:7; also possibly Gen 22:2; Jer 31:19-20 [LXX 38:20]), the sense of *plērōsai* seems to be likewise colored by the motif of fulfillment of prophecy. The sense of the whole pericope thus seems to be the following. Jesus comes to be baptized by John (vs. 13). John protests, pointing out the higher status of Jesus as the one who gives the eschatological baptism of the spirit (cf. 3:11: John knows who Jesus is because he has already prophesied about him). Jesus replies that this reversal of the order of precedence is to be allowed for the moment (3:15: *aphes arti*), for it is incumbent upon both John and Jesus (*hēmin*, at least on Mt's "historicizing" horizon, must refer to the two speakers) to fulfill every kind of justice — i.e., to fulfill every detail of God's eschatological plan for salvation, marked out beforehand in prophecy. It is a question of both John and Jesus playing their appointed roles at this moment of fulfillment. And Jesus' statement about fulfillment is immediately confirmed after his baptism (which is never really narrated). The eschatological gift of the spirit is poured forth upon the servant-Messiah-Son of God (vs. 16) and the *bat-qôl* announces that the OT prophecies are

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Schweizer, *Das Evangelium nach Matthäus*, 29, refers 3:15, 5:20, and 21:32 to man's action, 5:6 and 6:33 to God's gift, and leaves 5:10 open; similarly, "Christus und Gemeinde im Matthäusevangelium," 51.

[85] Cf. the interpretation of Sand, *Gesetz*, 201. While admitting the difficulty of the passage, we would tend to agree with Sand against Dupont, *Béatitudes* III, 225.

now being fulfilled (vs. 17). It is our contention, then, that taking *plērōsai pasan dikaiosynēn* in a prophetic or *heilsgeschichtliche* sense (instead of reducing it to a question of obedience and moral example) provides the whole pericope with a closely woven, unified motif.[86]

We can now come back to our main point, the meaning of *plērōsai* in 5:17. We have shown that there is no clear example in Mt of *plēroō* in the meaning of doing, obeying, accomplishing (law, commandments, etc.). But out of the sixteen occurrences of *plēroō*, twelve instances (plus one occurrence of *anaplēroō*) clearly refer to fulfillment of prophecy in the life and passion of Christ. The three other instances we have examined (13:48; 23:32; 3:15) carry at least some nuance of eschatological consummation, prophetic fulfillment, or fulfillment of a preordained destiny.[87] None of the three can be reduced to a mere "doing" or "obeying" of the Law. We submit, therefore, that there is no basis in Matthean usage for interpreting *plērōsai* in 5:17 as "doing" or "obeying" the Law, and also no basis for letting *prophētas* be absorbed into *nomon*, so as to give the whole verse a merely ethical thrust. The readily understandable conjunction of two key Matthean words, *plērōsai* and *prophētas*, casts a prophetic light upon the whole verse. And it is in this light that the puzzling conjunction of *plērōsai* and *nomon* must be interpreted. The Law in Mt must be interpreted in a prophetic light, in analogy with prophecy.

One final objection to our position must be dealt with. A number of authors object to interpreting the *plērōsai* (active voice) of 5:17 with the aid of the RZ, since in the latter *plēroō* always occurs in the passive voice. We reply that the difference in voices does not prove any great change in the meaning of the verb.[88] Rather, the difference in voices simply indicates a shift of perspective with regard to the agent under consideration. In the RZ, the fulfillment of the prophesied event is traced back to the agency of God the Father; hence, the divine passive (*plērōthēi*) is used. In 5:17, an eschatological-programmatic *ēlthon*-word, Jesus

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[86] Close to, though not identical with, our view is the position of Wrege, *Überlieferungsgeschichte*, 46 n. 4. Cf. also Frankemölle, *Jahwebund*, 94-95; Frankemölle acknowledges his dependence here on Bornkamm, "Enderwartung und Kirche im Matthäusevangelium," 33. Kretzer, *Herrschaft*, 267-269, claims that, in 6:33 in particular and in Mt in general, *dikaiosynē* means both gift and demand. In this he partly reflects the unpublished thesis of M. Fiedler, "Der Begriff *dikaiosynē* im Matthäus-Evangelium, auf seine Grundlagen untersucht," Halle, 1957. We agree that both ideas are present in Mt as a whole, but not equally so in every passage. We think that in passages like 5:6 and 6:33 the emphasis is definitely on the gift aspect.

[87] McConnell, *Law and Prophecy*, 18, thinks that Mt avoids using *plēroō* at the end of the Sermon on the Mount (Mt 7:28: *etelesen*; cf. Lk 7:1: *eplērōsen*) because he tries to avoid non-theological uses of *plēroō*.

[88] *Contra* Bornkamm, "Wandlungen," 75; Rothfuchs, *Erfüllungszitate*, 45, points out cases where the Hebrew OT text will have the pi'el form *mallē'*, which the LXX will translate by the passive *plērōthēnai*. Similar to Bornkamm's position is that of Sand, *Gesetz*, 184-185; Dupont, *Béatitudes* III, 241.

speaks in the first person of his mission and purpose; naturally, the verb is active. One might even see the difference of voices as reflecting the difference in *Gattungen*: RZ *versus* eschatological-programmatic *ēlthon*-words. How little difference the change in voice really makes to the basic meaning of the verb can be easily seen in the opening formula of the antitheses: *ēkousate hoti errethē tois archaiois ... egō de legō hymin* (cf. 5:21-22). Despite the change from passive to active (indeed, despite the fact that *errethē* was originally a different verb than *legō*!), the sense of the verb remains the same: God (divine passive) said this on Sinai, but on this Mount I say to you.... No one has suggested that *errethē* and *legō* should receive different translations because of the difference in voices. The combination *errethē-legō* illustrates very well the communality of meaning in the *plērōthē*$_i$ of the RZ and the *plērōsai* of 5:17: primary agency of God the Father and secondary agency of Jesus the Messiah — but the same basic activity.

Grammar. As for grammatical points and textual criticism in 5:17, practically nothing needs to be noted. Blass-Debrunner (No. 445, 2) point out that a disjunctive expression following a negative can be the equivalent of *ou ... oude*; *ou ... oute ... oute.* This may be the case here: I came to destroy neither ... nor; or, with the introductory clause: do not think I have come to destroy either ... or. Banks denies the interpretation of Blass-Debrunner in 5:17, but Sand prefers to give the *ē* its full value.[89] As regards textual criticism, there are no noteworthy variants. And as for the *Gattung*, we have already said in our study of *ēlthon* that 5:17 is a "pure" form of a programmatic-eschatological *ēlthon*-word. The introductory *mē nomisēte hoti* should not be thought of as changing the form, especially since the introduction may stem from Mt himself.[90]

We conclude Part One by summing up the salient points of our investigation, the points most likely to be useful in a study of tradition and redaction. (1) Mt is the only NT writer who prefixes *mē nomisēte* to an *ēlthon*-word (5:17 and 10:34); this introduction may stem from his redaction. (2) The aorist subjunctive of *mē nomisēte* attacks not a presently held thought but a thought that might possibly arise in the future; the verses immediately preceding and following suggest that

[89] Banks, "Matthew's Understanding," 228, denies Blass-Debrunner's contention, though Banks' counter-arguments are not too strong. Banks goes on to argue that the inclusion of prophets in 5:17 has nothing to do with the RZ and Mt's emphasis on prophetic fulfillment; again, his reasons are not convincing. Sand, *Gesetz*, 185, is probably more correct in seeing the *ē* in 5:17 as emphasizing each element of the canon as an individual unit.

[90] For the original form and position of 5:17 in the tradition, see below in Part Two, and again at the end of this chapter. For a list of the various opinions on the original position of 5:17, cf. Dupont, *Béatitudes* I, 144 n. 1; Grundmann, *Das Evangelium nach Matthäus*, 141-142. On how the separate logia came together, cf. the various views in Dupont, *Béatitudes* III, 251 n. 2, and also our remarks at the end of this chapter.

the prohibition is spoken to the disciples, not the Pharisees. (3) Mt 5:17 is the "pure" form of an eschatological-programmatic *ēlthon*-word. Either Mt created 5:17 by carefully modeling it on traditional examples or (more likely) he edited some *ēlthon*-word he received from the tradition. (4) *Katalyō* seems to be used with the precise meaning not witnessed elsewhere in the NT but present in the Maccabean literature: to annul the Law (not just an individual command) and so destroy the basis of the continued existence of the People of God. (5) The importance of prophets in Mt raises the question of whether the *prophētas* of 5:17 invites us to see the Law in analogy with the prophets and how this analogy should be understood. (6) Mt, unlike Paul, does not use *plēroō* in the context of obeying or carrying out the Law and its commandments. Out of sixteen occurrences of *plēroō*, twelve uses of *plēroō* (plus one occurrence of *anaplēroō*) refer explicitly to the fulfillment of prophesied events. At least some of the other four cases also carry the nuance of eschatological consummation or fulfillment of a pre-ordained destiny. The prophetic note in the *plērōsai* of 5:17 seems unmistakable.[91]

Part Two: **Tradition and Redaction of 5:17**

Compared with 5:18, 5:17 presents us with an obvious difficulty when we try to distinguish tradition from redaction: we have no synoptic parallel. In such a case, redaction-criticism, of necessity, becomes a more delicate and hypothetical operation.

But the lack of a synoptic parallel does not mean that we are bereft of all guidance and controls in our criticism of 5:17. There are two major "guide-posts" or points of reference that can help us to distinguish tradition from redaction — especially when these two guide-posts are used together. The first control or check on our criticism is the philological analysis, the results of which have just been summarized. The second control is our knowledge of Mt's redactional intent and *modus procedendi*, insofar as it has already become clear from our study of 5:18. That is why we placed the study of 5:18 before that of 5:17. It is reasonable to suppose that Mt was consistent in his intention and redactional activity throughout his work on 5:17-20. His redactional purpose, as manifested by 5:18, can be presupposed to be operative in 5:17, unless the opposite is shown to be the case. In 5:18, we saw Mt editing a strict Jewish-Christian logion to make it coincide with his view of Law and salvation-history. Instead of proclaiming the eternal

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[91] Hamerton-Kelly, "Attitudes," n. 18 on pp. 24-25, observes that all the interpretations of *plērōsai* can be reduced to either of two basic ones: (1) "ethical": E. Schweizer, G. Strecker, E. Blair, W. Trilling; (2) *heilsgeschichtliche*: V. Hasler, H. Ljungman. There is a danger here of a simplistic either-or, especially if the sense of 5:17-18 is: the Law is being reinterpreted in analogy with prophecy.

validity of the smallest point of the Law, 5:18 for Mt affirms the validity of the Law up until a set time limit in salvation history, a time limit that is described as the passing away of the old creation (5:18b), a time limit that involves the fulfillment of all prophecy (5:18d), a time limit that is the death-resurrection of Jesus (cf. Chapter II). It is not correct, then, to say that, while 5:17 speaks of both Law and prophets, 5:18 drops the theme of prophets and speaks only of Law. That was true of the original Jewish-Christian logion, but Mt has edited the logion precisely in order to introduce the element of prophetic fulfillment. In its redactional form, 5:18 speaks of both Law (5:18c) and prophets (5:18d). All this is now introduced by an *Amēn*-formula, which, in the early church, echoed the theme of apocalyptic knowledge or charismatic prophecy.[92] The general message of 5:18 is clear: for Mt, fulfillment of prophesied eschatological events forms the framework for a Christian understanding of the proper place of the Law. The Law-problem is solved in theory by being placed in a prophetic vision of salvation-history. Prophecy becomes normative for understanding Law. This is the statement of 5:18, and we surely have the right to suppose that the same basic message guided Mt's redaction of 5:17. With this guide-post, furnished by 5:18, let us now apply what we have learned about 5:17 in Part One of this section to the question of tradition *versus* redaction.

The first question we must face is whether we can even speak of tradition and redaction in 5:17. If Mt simply created 5:17 *ex nihilo*, we can dispense with arguments about pre-Matthean tradition. While we grant that, because a synoptic parallel is lacking, we cannot be absolutely sure that Mt actually edited some previous tradition, we still think that probability lies on the side of 5:17's having some tradition behind it. Mt 5:17 is a pure form of the *ēlthon*-words, a *Gattung* which Mt did not create. Mt's redactional activity seems rather to be the prefixing of *mē nomisēte* to an *ēlthon*-word he has received. Also, as we shall soon see, the two infinitives and their two objects do not seem perfectly matched. Such an inconsistency might indicate a tension between tradition and redaction. We feel justified, therefore, in following the majority of scholars who do not see 5:17 as a purely Matthean creation.[93]

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[92] K. Berger stresses the background of apocalyptic knowledge; V. Hasler stresses charismatic prophecy. To say that these undertones would have been heard by early Christians is not necessarily to agree that the *Amēn*-formula did not go back to Jesus (who, in one aspect of his ministry, could well be designated an apocalyptic seer or prophet).

[93] This is obviously the position of those who, like Joachim Jeremias and R. Banks, think that the logion in some form goes back to Jesus. But even the highly skeptical, such as Bultmann, see pre-Matthean tradition here. For other arguments in favor of 5:17's being traditional, cf. Hamerton-Kelly, "Attitudes," 23 n. 13.

What did the logion look like before Mt's redaction? We shall suggest three places in the logion where Mt may have edited his received text. The three suggestions will be ordered according to their increasingly hypothetical nature. The first, and most likely redactional touch is Mt's addition of *mē nomisēte* before the *ēlthon*-word. We have already seen that such an introduction appears only in Mt, and that the warning in the second person plural fits both with the preceding references to the audience (disciples) and with the problems that the subsequent antitheses are going to raise. The pre-Matthean form of the logion would have begun simply with *ouk ēlthon* (cf. Mk 2:17 = Mt 9:13).

Secondly, we suspect some redactional activity with regard to one of the objects following the infinitives. *Katalyō* makes perfect sense with *nomon*: to annul or abolish the Law (seen as a whole). What *katalyō* can mean in reference to *prophētas* is unclear. Once we understand Mt's general interest in prophecy (cf. *plēroō* in RZ) and in particular his redaction of 5:18 (5:18d inserting the idea of prophetic fulfillment into what was merely a statement about Law, thus producing a "Law-and-prophets" theme in 5:18 as well as in 5:17), to try to reduce *prophētas* to the meaning of "the moral teaching of the prophets" would be forced. Yet to take *prophētas* at its full Matthean value causes difficulty in translating *katalyō*. "To declare the prophets unrealizable" is both an awkward idea and a doubtful translation of the verb. *Katalyein tous prophētas* is simply absent from the LXX and the rest of the NT. The closest parallel we can find in the NT is Jn 10:35 (*ou dynatai lythēnai hē graphē*), and even here it is not a question of prophecy but of a citation used in an *a fortiori* argument ("I said, 'you are gods.'"). When we consider that in Mt 5:18 the motif of prophetic fulfillment was absent from the original logion but was introduced by Mt (5:18d), we may conjecture, in the light of the awkward conjunction of *katalyō* with *prophētas*, that Mt also introduced the theme of prophecy in 5:17. Such an insertion would fit in perfectly with the great Matthean interest in prophets which we reviewed in Part One of this section, under *prophētas* and *plērōsai*. If we strike out *ē tous prophētas* as a Matthean addition, we are left with *ouk ēlthon katalysai to nomon·ouk ēlthon katalysai alla plērōsai*.

This brings us to our third suggestion, which is the most hypothetical of all. In the redactional form of 5:17, *prophētas ... plērōsai* makes eminent sense. We need not review all we have said about the RZ to prove that point. But, if we agree to cross out *ē tous prophētas*, we are left with *ouk katalysai* (*ton nomon*) *alla plērōsai*. Although *plērōsai ton nomon* is not impossible in Greek, it is not the most common usage. It is totally absent from the LXX, and from Mt outside of 5:17. In fact, it is unknown to the rest of the NT, with the exception of a few passages in Paul. So, while *plērōsai ton nomon* is not impossible in biblical

Greek, the usual verbs are *poiein, phylassein, tērein,* and the like. Since we find *poiein* in vs. 19, we are tempted to conjecture that *poiein* originally stood in vs. 17, especially if 5:17-19 formed a pre-Matthean unit (a question to be taken up at the end of this chapter). We would suggest that the pre-Matthean form of 5:17 may have read *ouk ēlthon katalysai ton nomon · ouk ēlthon katalysai alla poiein* (or *tērein, phylassein, prassein,* etc.). We might even reduce the logion to *ouk ēlthon katalysai ton nomon alla poiein,* a form which would correspond to the laconic saying of Mk 2:17b.

This last point is quite hypothetical, we admit, and we advance it with great hesitation.[94] But at least a fair number of critics agree on seeing *ē tous prophētas* as redactional.[95] Granted this view, we must ask ourselves: Why would Mt add this object and possibly even change a verb to fit it? We have already suggested that Mt's redactional activity in 5:17-18 aimed at modifying a traditional statement about Law so that the emphasis of the logia would be shifted from keeping the Law to prophetic fulfillment. But this involved making *ton nomon,* along with *tous prophētas,* the object of *plērōsai.* This would make sense to Mt only if he had a concept of the Law as (in some sense) prophetic. And that he has. We have seen indications of that concept in our study of 5:18 and our philological analysis of 5:17. But perhaps the clearest indication of a Matthean theology of prophetic Law is Mt 11:13 (=Lk 16:16). We have already discussed some of the problems of the logion from the Lukan vantage point.[96] The problems of Lk 16:16 are numerous,[97] but one thing seems to be certain. The wording of Lk 16:16a seems to be more original than the corresponding wording of Mt 11:13: [98]

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[94] An alternate solution is that of Descamps, *Les justes,* 131: the original, non-Matthean sense of *plērōsai* (observe faithfully) has received a deeper Christian sense from the redactor, a sense which includes innovation and superiority. But this solution, while possible, must presuppose two unlikely factors that happily converge: (1) the presence of the rare NT phrase *nomon ... plērōsai* in the tradition, and (2) the happy coincidence that the *plērōsai* fits perfectly with Mt's stress on *plēroō* in the RZ.

[95] So, e.g., Allen, *Commentary on the Gospel According to S. Matthew,* 46; C. Montefiore, *The Synoptic Gospels* (N.Y.: KTAV, 1968) 47; Schmid, *Das Evangelium nach Matthäus,* 87; Benoit-Boismard, *Synopse* II, 137 (but they go too far in making the redactional form of 5:17 refer only to the fulfillment of prophecies). Perhaps the best discussion is in Descamps' "Essai d'interprétation de Mt 5, 17-48. Formgeschichte ou Redaktionsgeschichte?" *Studia Evangelica I* (ed. F. Cross; Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1959) 156-173, especially 160-162. Descamps' essay is one of the best works available on the subject; despite our disagreements with some of his interpretations, we are profoundly indebted to his work. — Some commentators have felt the difficulty of *ē tous prophētas* to be so great that they have suggested that the phrase is a later interpolation. But the manuscript evidence is definitely against this. The attempt to see an interpolation is, however, a telling sign of how jarring *prophētas* is felt to be by some critics.

[96] Cf. n. 54 of this chapter.

[97] For example, one might ask whether Lk 16:16 really supports Conzelmann's contention that, for Lk, the Baptist stands outside *die Mitte der Zeit,* that he is still part of the OT and therefore bereft of the Elijah-like role of eschatological

Mt 11:13	Lk 16:16a
pantes gar hoi prophētai kai ho nomos heōs Iōannou eprophēteusan.	*Ho nomos kai hoi prophētai mechri Iōannou.*

We can detect two redactional touches of Mt in 11:13. First, Mt has changed the usual order of "Law and prophets" (or "Moses and the prophets") to "all the prophets and the Law" — an order unknown to the rest of the NT and to the whole of the LXX. Since we know from the Lukan parallel that both *nomos* and *prophētai* were present in the tradition, it is not a case of Mt's adding *nomos* to give a statement about prophets a legal bent. On the contrary, Mt's inversion of the usual order is a startling theological statement, for he thus stands the OT canon on its head.[99] As we have seen, rabbinic Judaism considered the Torah "the canon within the canon." The prophets were seen first of all as the legitimate interpreters and guardians of the Torah in its transmission. Mt has turned around this view 180 degrees. For Mt, the "canon within the canon" is constituted by the prophets (note the emphatic *pantes gar*). The Law's place in salvation-history is to be understood in connection with the prophets.[100] Understanding the function of the Law in Mt's thought demands first of all understanding the role he assigns the prophets. Mt's second redactional alteration in 11:13 hammers home this point. "All the prophets and the Law *prophesied.*" Nowhere in the whole of the LXX or in the rest of the NT does *nomos* ever govern the verb *prophēteuō*. Mt could not be clearer in subsuming the Law under the prophets. The aorist of the verb is probably to be classified under what M. Zerwick calls the *aoristus complexivus*: what was in reality a long period of time is viewed as a simple past

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forerunner. Conzelmann is able to paint this portrait of the Baptist only because he does not take seriously the Lukan infancy narrative (especially Lk 1:13-20, 44, 68-80).

[98] The attempts by a few critics (e.g., Sand, *Gesetz*, 179 n. 8) to see Mt's version as the original Q-reading are hardly convincing. As we note in the text, the phrase "All the prophets and the Law" occurs no place else in the LXX and the NT, and nowhere else in the LXX and the NT does *nomos* govern the verb *prophēteuō*. The omission of *kai ho nomos* by a few of the ancient versions (the Sinaitic Syriac and, partly, the Bohairic) only testifies to the difficulty some later scribes encountered in understanding the Matthean text; cf. Rothfuchs, *Erfüllungszitate*, 111-112.

[99] Cf. von Campenhausen, *Entstehung*, 6-7; von Campenhausen notes that, according to some rabbis, in the Messianic age the prophets and writings would lose their validity and only the Torah would not cease.

[100] This point is missed by Bornkamm, "Wandlungen," 75 n. 7. Closer to the truth is Kretzer, *Herrschaft*, 70. Rothfuchs, *Erfüllungszitate*, 112, phrases it well: "Mt sieht demnach das Alte Testament wesentlich in seinem Bezug auf die Geschichte Jesu." And for Mt the whole of Scripture is prophetic (Rothfuchs, *Erfüllungszitate*, 113-114); in this, Rothfuchs sees the influence of Jewish apocalyptic (pp. 117-118). Cf. also U. Luck, *Die Vollkommenheitsforderung der Bergpredigt* (Munich: Kaiser, 1968) 29.

fact.[101] And it is indeed a *past* fact, over and done with from the viewpoint of the speaker (aorist!). This must hold true for both subjects, *prophētai* and *nomos*. No doubt, for Mt, both prophets and Law hold an honored place in the church. But the height of their importance, their central function, is past.[102] This is more easily seen in the case of the prophets. Of course, they still witness to Christ, as Mt's gospel makes clear. But their chief function under the old dispensation was to point to Messianic events that were still in the future. When the eschatological future became the present and (for Mt) the "historical" past, the prophets lost their main function of pointing ahead. They rather witness to and confirm what has already been fulfilled (thus the possible apologetic note in Mt's use of the RZ).[103] But this means that now Jesus, not the prophets, is the center of the Christian's (and Mt's) attention, devotion, and faith. It is not so much a question of Jesus' relation to the prophets as rather a question of the prophets' relation to Jesus. Jesus is the normative center of interpretation.

All that we have said up till now has been meant to show that the same thing is analogously true of the Law. The Law — both in its ethical demands and in its occasional prophecies — pointed ahead to Jesus.[104] But when the eschatological fulfillment came, the Law lost its main function of pointing ahead; it ceased to hold the center of the stage. Jesus, not the Law, is now the center of the Christian's (and Mt's) attention, devotion, and obedience — and that includes moral observance. This is the point of the antitheses: "It was said (by God on Sinai) ... but I say to you" (5:21-22). The whole Sermon on the Mount ends not with an exhortation to observe the Mosaic Law but with an emphasis on the words of Jesus as the focus of Christian living (7:24: "Therefore, whoever hears these words of *mine* and does them," — which is equivalent to "doing the will of *my* Father" in 7:21). On the divorce question, Jesus states that the Mosaic concession does not reflect perfectly the original will of the Creator: "Moses allowed ... but I say to you" (19:8-9). The ultimate demand on the would-be disciple is *not* keeping the ethical commands of the Torah, not even keeping the love-commandment (19:18-19 — love of neighbor being placed alongside

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[101] Zerwick, *Graecitas Biblica*, No. 253.

[102] One should avoid such blanket statements as, "[in 11:13 Mt is] reaffirming that John terminates the Law and the prophets" (J. McKenzie, "The Gospel According to Matthew," *JBC* II, 82).

[103] For a comparison with Qumran on this point, cf. Moule, "Fulfilment Words," 310.

[104] To try to make *ho nomos* in Mt 11:13 refer *only* to the relatively few sections of the Pentateuch that contain Messianic prophecies is an undue restriction which runs counter to Mt's use of the word *nomos* (the Law seen as a whole). Banks, "Matthew's Understanding," 231, has some fine remarks on the Law as prophetic, even in its moral teaching. It is to be regretted that his insights are not carried through consistently in his exegesis of 5:18. On the Law as prophetic in Mt 5:17, see also the remarks of Dupont, *Béatitudes* I, 138-145.

of the decalogue of the Torah). The ultimate demand is abandoning all to follow Jesus (19:20-21). Doing *all* the Law demanded (note *panta*), including the love-commandment, was not enough. The person of Jesus is the touchstone for judgment (10:32-33, 37-39). And the gospel ends not with a validation of the Mosaic Law, but with a universal mission to the Gentiles, with baptism in place of circumcision as the initiation rite, with the commands of Jesus as the norm of Christian morality, and with the presence of the risen Jesus as that morality's sustaining force (28:16-20 — cf. the conclusion of our second chapter). As R. Banks puts it so well, for Mt it is not a question of Jesus' stance vis-à-vis the Law, but rather the Law's stance vis-à-vis Jesus. Jesus, not the Law, stands at the center of the Christian's life and thought — as was the case with prophecy.[105] We see, then, what it means to say that, for Mt, the Law is interpreted in analogy with prophecy. It is not only a matter of the prophets' stress on mercy and compassion, a stress which acts as a criterion for interpreting the Torah. This point has been rightly emphasized by critics, notably Bornkamm, Barth, and Schweizer. But this is not the whole story. Mt's total view of the Law also means assigning the Law a prophetic role in a given period of salvation-history — a role and a period that are superseded by the eschatological fulfiller of the Law and the prophets, Jesus the Messiah. Jesus, in his words and in his actions, is the norm of morality for Christians (*plērōsai* referring to both teaching and acting, though teaching is paramount in the immediate context). The Son of God alone can fully teach the sons what it means to do the will of the heavenly Father (cf. 5:43-48 and 11:25-30). For the Christian, the person of Jesus, who is God-with-us, simply takes the place of the Torah as the center of the Christian's life (cf. 18:20, in conjunction with 1:23 and 28:20). This fits in perfectly with the "high Christology" of Mt: in the first gospel, Jesus is definitely Son of God in a unique, transcendent sense, as well as Messiah who fulfills the Law and prophets, divine Wisdom who reveals the Father's will, risen Lord who meets his brothers, and finally, eschatological Son of Man, to whom all power has been given.[106] The category of Jesus as eschatological rabbi, giving a new

[105] Banks, "Matthew's Understanding," 242; also Schmauch, "Reich Gottes," 14; Carlston, "The Things That Defile," 82-83. Bornkamm is inexact when he says ("Wandlungen," 75): "Die Aussage 5,17 zielt also nicht auf die in der Schrift geweissagten, in und mit Jesus eingetroffenen Ereignisse, vielmehr auf *Jesu Stellung zum Gesetz*...." (emphasis ours); the same unfortunate phraseology is found in Sand, *Gesetz*, 183. Too often the question that was burning for the Jewish contemporaries of the historical Jesus (i.e., what is the stance of Jesus vis-à-vis the Law) is a-critically transferred to the redactional level of a gospel written by a Christian (perhaps a Gentile) c. A.D. 90. Too much baptismal water had flowed under the bridge in the meantime! — Luck, *Vollkommenheitsforderung*, 20, prefers to speak of a "symbiosis" between the Law and the word of Jesus; but this does not do full justice to Mt's thought.

[106] For the importance of Mt's Christology in this whole question, cf. Frankemölle, *Jahwebund*, 169-170.

interpretation of the Torah, is correct, but insufficient. As Son of God and Son of Man, Jesus dares to replace key parts of the Torah with his own words. *That* is what Mt means by eschatological fulfillment.

We submit, then, that 5:17-18 and Mt's whole theology of Law demand a full appreciation not only of salvation-history in Mt but also of the transcendent nature of Christ's person and mission. Ultimately, the whole Law-question in Mt is Christologically grounded. It is Jesus in whom all prophecies are fulfilled, Jesus who authoritatively interprets, radicalizes, and rescinds the Mosaic Law,[107] Jesus who, by his death-resurrection, brings about the turning of the ages, Jesus who now rules the cosmos as exalted Son of Man. In Mt, the Law-question is a question of salvation-history, prophetic fulfillment, realized eschatology, and high Christology. No one who misses that point can interpret 5:17-18 correctly.

SECTION C: Mt 5:19

Part One: **Philological and Historical Data for Mt 5:19**

Ean. This word appears very frequently instead of *an* (cf. the second half of vs. 19) after relatives in the NT, as in the LXX and papyri.

Oun. An inferential and transitional conjunction. Its meaning varies with the context, and at times it may be left untranslated. It would be a mistake, then, to build any *a priori* theories about the connection of vs. 19 to vs. 18 on the basis of *oun.*

Lyō. The verb has various meanings: loose, untie bonds, set free, break up, destroy, tear down, bring to an end, abolish; so of commandments and laws: repeal, annul (not just transgress in an individual instance). *Lyō* and *katalyō* often have the same sense; Josephus alternates between the two.[108] This follows the general tendency of compound verbs in koine; the special force of the prefix is often weakened or lost. But, as we noted in vs. 17, the context suggests a distinction: abolishing the whole Law (vs. 17) *versus* repealing individual commandments (vs. 19). The verb in itself does not make clear whether the action of relaxing or annulling is conceived of as a teaching or a doing; we do not have here the set terminology of binding and loosing (Mt 16:19; 18:18).[109] But, since

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[107] Cf. the simple yet good summary of this whole matter in K. Staab, *Das Evangelium nach Matthäus* (Würzburg: Echter-Verlag, 1951) 31-32; also, Miegge, *Il sermone sul monte,* 87-90.

[108] Cf. A. Schlatter, *Der Evangelist Matthäus*[3] (Stuttgart: Calwer, 1948) 157. — Miegge, *Il sermone sul monte,* 94, does not seem to be correct in saying that *lyō* here means only violate, not abolish. Grundmann, *Das Evangelium nach Matthäus,* 150, thinks that *lyō* means not an annulling in principle but a suspension which passes over a law.

[109] Still less is the reference to oath terminology, as Fiebig holds in *Jesu Bergpredigt,* 27.

the word stands in conjunction with *didaskō* and in antithetic parallelism to *poieō*, the idea of breaking by action is better suited to the immediate context. The larger context is obviously concerned with both doing and teaching. Note that while the *plērōsai* of vs. 17 referred to the special action of Jesus, the general words, doing and teaching, seem to be referred here to a larger group (disciples in general? teachers?).

Entolē. The word, "precept," "commandment," occurs six times in Mt, six times in Mk, and four times in Lk. The six usages in Mt suggest the idea of an individual commandment rather than the Law as a whole (*nomos*). This nuance may be influenced by the debate with Pharisaism, which counted 613 *miṣwōt* in the Torah.[110] Great spirits like Hillel tried to counteract the atomistic approach to God's will, an approach which multiplied individual commands (all of equal importance!). According to the popular view, one never knew what reward one would receive for obeying a particular precept; as a result, a light commandment was to be as highly esteemed as a heavy one. Practically, then, all commandments were equally important.[111]

It is generally held by commentators that "least" (predicated here of commandments) is probably derived from the rabbinic "light" commandments, as opposed to the "heavy" ones. Even if this view is correct, the meaning of "light" is not immediately clear. The light-heavy distinction could mean a number of different things. (1) Those commandments were light which demanded only a slight expenditure of energy or money in order to fulfill them (e.g., the prohibition against drinking blood or eating certain fruits); and, on the contrary, the heavy commandments demanded a heavy outlay of money or even the imperiling of one's life (e.g., honoring father and mother, circumcision). (2) The first distinction easily passed to the distinction between unimportant and important commandments. Hence the heavy *miṣwâ* is called "great" (*gᵉdolâ* or *rabbâ* — so *megas*) and the light becomes small (*zᵉʿērâ* — so *mikros*). This usage seems to be the closest to 5:19. (3) Violation of a light commandment could be atoned for by penitence alone; violation of a heavy one could require the death-penalty. (4) Those commandments were called light to which men usually did not pay much attention. Amid all these

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[110] For all that follows, cf. Strack-Billerbeck, *Kommentar* I, 900-902. Although rabbinic parallels are not too relevant for the redactional intent of a Gentile author, they are important for the study of possible Jewish-Christian tradition in our verses.

[111] It is surprising to see so many commentators stating that the sense of vs. 19 is that all the commandments are equally important, in keeping with the Jewish-rabbinic idea; so Trilling, *Israel*, 180. The obvious sense of vs. 19 is that all the commandments are *not* of equal importance, since the breaking of the insignificant ones results in a low place in the Kingdom. Surely the author(s) of vs. 19 held that serious breaches of the Law resulted in exclusion from the Kingdom. Cf. also Sand, *Gesetz*, 35-36. For the rabbinic idea of the equal importance of all commandments, cf. also J. Bonsirven, *Textes rabbiniques des deux prémiers siècles chrétiens* (Rome: Pontificio Istituto Biblico, 1955) Nos. 301, 302 bis, and 321.

terminological difficulties, the rabbis were agreed on some points. The light commandments included such actions as tying the thongs of one's shoes in the Jewish manner. Heavy commandments included those regarding idolatry, shedding of blood, profanation of God's name, sanctification of the Sabbath, calumniation of one's neighbor, and the study of the Torah. As far as Mt's tradition is concerned, if any of these rabbinic usages is reflected in 5:19, it is probably number (2).

Lohmeyer's attempt to refer *entolōn* to Jesus' commandments, as opposed to the *nomos* of vss. 17-18, is not very convincing, at least with regard to the primary sense of 5:19.[112] All of the other examples of *entolē* in Mt (15:3; 19:17; 22:36, 38, 40) clearly refer to specific OT precepts. The same is true of Mk and Lk, with the one exception of the parable of the prodigal son (Lk 15:29). The synoptic tradition does not employ the noun *entolē* in the Johannine manner for the commands of Jesus. *Entellomai,* the corresponding verb, is used of Jesus in Mt 28:20, but it is also used in Mt of God and Moses.

It would seem, then, that "these least commandments" refer back to the yod and stroke of vs. 18. But F. Dibelius objects that 'these smallest commandments" cannot refer back to the yod and stroke, since the yod and stroke are not commandments and cannot be metaphors for commandments.[113] A part, says Dibelius, cannot be used metaphorically for the whole. Having thus gratuitously brushed aside the facts of rhetoric, and having decided that "these smallest commandments" refer to no preceding words in the context, Dibelius asks what well-known commandments would be acknowledged by everyone as the smallest without any further explanation. Since the scribes disputed over which commandments were the "lightest," such light commandments cannot be meant. Obviously, says Dibelius, what is meant are those commandments on the second tablet of the decalogue which are expressed in Hebrew in only two words — thou shalt not kill, etc. But we must reply that such a position has no foundation in either rabbinic or Matthean usage.[114] The reference

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[112] Lohmeyer, *Das Evangelium des Matthäus,* 110-111.

[113] F. Dibelius, "Zwei Worte Jesu," *ZNW* 11 (1910) 188-192, especially 188-189.

[114] We would hardly bother with this opinion if it were not for the fact that G. Schrenk uncritically adopts it in "entolē," *TDNT* II, 548. The supposition that the smallest commandments refer to the second tablet of the decalogue seems especially weak when one considers that the "longer commandments" concerning perjury and covetousness must be arbitrarily left out, as must also the commandment concerning father and mother (included by Jesus in Mt 19:19). One gets the impression that the whole explanation was thought up to escape the obvious but embarrassing meaning of the context. Moreover, Strack-Billerbeck give no example of this meaning of "smallest commandments" in rabbinical literature. Finally, referring the smallest commandments to murder, adultery, and theft forces Dibelius and Schrenk to twist the meaning of "shall be called least" to "shall be excluded" — since sins of murder, theft, and adultery can hardly give one even a low place in the Kingdom. We shall refute this interpretation when we treat *elachistos.* — E. Percy, *Die Botschaft Jesu* (Lund: Gleerup, 1953) 121 n. 6, also rejects Dibelius' position; he asks who would think

to the yod and stroke as metaphors for minor precepts should be retained as the best explanation.

Houtos. The adjective refers to something comparatively near at hand (at least psychologically), just as *ekeinos* refers to something comparatively distant. This might provide another argument against Lohmeyer's attempt to refer the smallest commandments to vss. 21ff rather than to vss. 17-18.

Elachistos. As we have already noted, the interpretation of *elachistos klēthēsetai* in terms of exclusion from the Kingdom has been enshrined in Kittel's *TDNT.* In order to refute this position, we must give here a detailed treatment of *elachistos.*

Elachistos, the superlative form of the adjective *mikros,* is used 14× in the NT: 5× in Mt, never in Mk, 4× in Lk, 3× in 1 Cor, 1× in Eph, 1× in Jam. Mt and Lk do not share any example in a Q-passage. The usage varies widely. In Lk, the word is used in sayings about being powerful or faithful in a very small matter as opposed to a great matter (12:26; 16:10, twice; 19:17). The general connection with Mt 5:19 is the opposition of small and great. Lk 16:10 also has the opposition faithful-unjust, and Lk 19:17 has the correlation of fidelity and reward. So we find in Lk some motifs related to 5:19; the context in both gospels is often parenesis with a reference to judgment. But the precise use of *elachistos* in Mt 5:19 is not paralleled in Lk. Lk always uses *elachistos* of some matter, affair, commission, or object of anxiety. He never uses it of persons (unlike 1 Cor 15:9; Eph 3:8).

In Mt, as opposed to Lk, the reference is more often to a person. Mt 2:6, quoting Mic 5:1, addresses a personified Bethlehem. The LXX reads *oligostos,* but Mt substitutes *elachistē.* Mt 25:40 and 25:45 use the phrase *heni toutōn* (*tōn adelphōn mou*) *tōn elachistōn.* The exact reference is disputed (apostles? missionaries? all disciples in need? all men in need?). Grundmann, Bonnard, and Schweizer rightly take *elachistōn* as referring to all men in need, and not just Christians.[115]

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of annulling laws against murder, adultery, and theft. Dalman, *Jesus-Jeschua,* 58-59, notes that in Aramaic the demonstrative may be used with some well-known noun, even when the noun has not been mentioned beforehand; here the reference would be to the well-known distinction between light and heavy commandments used by the rabbis. H. Schürmann, "'Wer daher eines dieser geringsten Gebote auflöst....' Wo fand Matthäus das Logion Mt 5,19?" *BZ* 4 (1960) 238-250, disputes this last view on p. 241. He rightly sees no reason why *toutōn* cannot refer to the metaphor of *iōta* and *keraia.* Especially on the hypothesis of a Gentile redactor, the best procedure is to look for a reasonable reference for the demonstrative in the context, before *toutōn* is dismissed as a semitism.

[115] Grundmann, *Das Evangelium nach Matthäus,* 527; Bonnard, *L'Evangile selon Saint Matthieu,* 366; Schweizer, *Das Evangelium nach Matthäus,* 312. Mt 10:42 might argue in favor of missionaries or disciples. But a different form is used there (*hena tōn mikrōn toutōn*) and the important precision *eis onoma mathētou* is lacking in 25:40, 45. M.-J. Lagrange, *Evangile selon Saint Matthieu*[4] (Paris: Gabalda, 1927) 488-489, seems to prefer the restriction to Christians.

At first glance, the results of a survey on the synoptic use of *elachistos* do not contribute much to an interpretation of 5:19. We do find a reciprocal pattern in Lk, but *elachistos* is not applied there to persons. Some of the instances in Mt refer to the lowly estate of persons in the eyes of men (who judge incorrectly). In reference to the brothers of Jesus, the word almost becomes a paradoxical title of honor. One point, however, does seem clear. No usage indicates a negative judgment on the part of God, let alone exclusion from the Kingdom or damnation.

To be sure of our results, though, we should study the related words *mikros* and *mikroteros*. Mt uses *mikros* in the positive degree four times (10:42; 18:6, 10, 14); he uses *mikroteros* twice (11:11; 13:32).[116] All four positive uses have the same form: *tōn mikrōn toutōn*. The reference in 10:42 (same logion in Mk 9:41, but without *mikrōn*) is either to Christian missionaries (cf. the whole context of ch. 10) or to any Christian in need (cf. the immediate context of 10:42: *eis onoma mathētou*).[117] In Mt 18:6 (= Mk 9:42; Lk 17:2; cf. Lk 9:48) the reference could be to the *paidion* of vss. 2+5. But the qualification *tōn pisteuontōn eis eme* (Mt adding *eis eme* to Mk) argues in favor of a reference to weak Christians exposed to neglect and spiritual dangers.[118] This meaning is even clearer in 18: 10+14, which frame the parable of the lost sheep. So Mt's use of *mikros* is consistent with his use of *elachistos*: the reference is personal; the usage is positive, not pejorative (what is small in the eyes of man is important in the eyes of God and deserves attention). The Matthean usage of *mikroteros* does not bring us any further. Mt 11:11 (= Lk 7:28) states that the least in the Kingdom is greater than the Baptist. The reference here could be to the disciple who is blessed with the presence and proclamation of Jesus himself (cf. Mt 13: 16-17) as opposed to the

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[116] Note that, while *mikroteros* is, strictly speaking, the comparative degree, it can easily have a superlative meaning; cf. Zerwick, *Graecitas Biblica*, No. 146; so in our two examples from Mt. — We should note in passing that one should be careful in using *mikros*, *mikroteros*, *megas*, and *meizōn* from other passages in Mt to explain the meaning of *elachistos* in 5:19. Schmauch, "Reich Gottes," 15-17, confuses *elachistos* with Mt's references to the "least" in 25:40, 45 and to the "little ones" in chs. 10 and 18, and so refers the "least commandments" to concern for the least of the brethren. — *Elachistos* in 5:19 is an expression of the eschatological penalty inflicted on a person by God, not of the earthly humiliation or lowly state of a Christian. Feuillet, "Morale ancienne," 126-128, fails to see this; so too Lenski, *The Interpretation*, 212. Dupont, *Les Béatitudes* I, 137, rightly sees that 5:19d is concerned with the final stage of the Kingdom in heaven.

[117] Grundmann, *Das Evangelium nach Matthäus*, 301-302, allows that originally *mikrōn* may have referred to children, but that here the reference is to disciples in general. Schweizer, *Das Evangelium nach Matthäus*, 164, not only sees a reference here to disciples, but also judges Mk 9:37's transference to children as *traditionsgeschichtlich* more recent. Bonnard, *L'Evangile selon Saint Matthieu*, 159, prefers a reference to all disciples, especially the most humble, though he mentions the possibility that the reference in ch. 18 could be to converted pagans despised by Jewish Christians.

[118] On this point, Lagrange, Grundmann, Bonnard, and Schweizer seem to be in basic agreement; see their commentaries *ad loc.*

periods of the OT and the Baptist.[119] In turn, this reference could be divided, according to Mt's double horizon, into references to the disciples of the historical past of Jesus' public ministry and to those disciples who share the Kingdom and the presence of Jesus in the church (28:20). The reference certainly is not to those admitted to the full Kingdom at the end of time, since Mt would not exclude the Baptist from final salvation.[120] There is even a possibility that *mikroteros* might be a veiled reference to Jesus.[121] At any rate, once again there is no basis here for reading *mikroteros* as meaning exclusion from the Kingdom; on the contrary, it obviously means inclusion. The only other usage in Mt, 13:32 (= Mk 4:31), refers to the mustard seed, and so indirectly to the contrast between the small beginnings of the Kingdom and the great extent it attains. The other uses in Mk and Lk are either neutral (Mk 15:40; Lk 19:3) or positive as regards God's evaluation (Lk 9:48; 12:32). There is no use of *elattōn* in the synoptics.

The picture we get of this synoptic *Wort-Feld* (*elachistos, mikros, mikroteros*) is fairly consistent. The synoptics know no usage that refers to a negative judgment in God's eyes, certainly not to exclusion from the Kingdom. The usage of Mt is mostly positive. The closest Matthean usage to 5:19 is 11:11 (*ho de mikroteros en tēi basileiai tōn ouranōn*), and the sense there is obviously one of inclusion in the Kingdom. But we must admit that no other NT usage completely parallels the use of *elachistos* in Mt 5:19, which we must now examine by itself.

When we survey the NT occurrences of *elachistos*, we notice that the true superlative sense is not too frequent (instances are 1 Cor 15:9 and Eph 3:8 [*elachistoterōi*!], also perhaps Mt 2:6). The more usual sense is elative: very small, quite unimportant. The elative sense is certainly possible in 5:19. The use of *elachistos* with the plural *entolōn* and the fact that the whole rule can apply to any number of persons (*hos ean* ...) do not favor a true superlative sense. If we should accept the elative sense here, further doubt would be cast on F. Dibelius' view, which refers *entolōn* ... *elachistōn* to the commandments which are *the* shortest, in the strict superlative sense.[122] *Elachistos* applied to the person mentioned

[119] So Schweizer, *Das Evangelium nach Matthäus*, 169-170, who rejects the possibility that *mikroteros* refers to Jesus himself; cf. also Bonnard, *L'Evangile selon Saint Matthieu*, 163.

[120] So rightly Grundmann, *Das Evangelium nach Matthäus*, 307, who refers *mikroteros* to the disciples of Jesus.

[121] In this case *mikroteros* would bear a true comparative sense.

[122] Once again, F. Dibelius' view is taken over uncritically in the *TDNT* in O. Michel's article, "mikros," *TDNT* IV, 656. Michel produces no rabbinic evidence for his position. As we have already noted, Schrenk, "entolē," *TDNT* II, 548, follows F. Dibelius in drawing the logical conclusion about "shall be called least." Since a person committing murder, adultery, or theft (and teaching others to do likewise!) could hardly be thought of as being admitted to heaven, the phrase, says Schrenk, must really mean "be excluded from the kingdom." No proof from rabbinical literature is given that the phrase of vs. 19 was ever used in this way. And we have

in 5:19 probably means "very insignificant," "very unimportant"; at any rate, the whole synoptic testimony goes against a meaning of exclusion. *Elachistos* would thus involve the idea, seen elsewhere in the synoptic tradition, of gradations of honor or dishonor in the Kingdom of heaven (cf. Mk 10:35-45; also Lk 12:47-48; cf. Apoc 20:6).[123] The rabbis noted that we cannot be sure in this world who is great and who is small, but that all this would be made clear in the world to come. Those who made themselves small in this world for the sake of the Torah would be great in the future world. There were seven divisions of the just in heaven. Each just man had his own Eden, or even his own world. The status in the next world, once attained, cannot be changed.[124] Weighing all the evidence, then, we can safely reject the idea of exclusion from the Kingdom in 5:19.

Commentators who see in 5:17-20 an attack against Paul refer the *elachistos* to him (cf. 1 Cor 15:9); they also draw attention to the meaning of the Latin *paulus*. But such exegesis is farfetched. There is no real evidence for seeing anti-Paulinism in these verses.[125]

Didaskō. Of 95 occurrences in the NT, 14 are in Mt, 17 in Mk, 17 in Lk, 9 in Jn, 16 in Acts, and 15 are scattered in the Pauline corpus.[126] The fact that Mt uses the verb less frequently than Mk is a healthy warning not to build a theology of a gospel merely on word statistics. In Mt, 9 out of the 14 occurrences refer to the activity of Jesus (4:23; 5:2; 7:29; 9:35; 11:1; 13:54; 21:23; 22:16; 26:55). The only other two clear instances before the final pericope of the gospel have a sinister reference. In 15:9, Jesus, quoting LXX Is 29:13, says that the Pharisees and scribes teach as

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seen that synoptic usage of *elachistos, mikros,* and *mikroteros* does not favor the idea of exclusion. Rather, Schrenk's translation of *elachistos* is arrived at because of the inner logic of his starting point. The similar position of Schweizer, *Das Evangelium nach Matthäus,* 62, is also to be rejected (but cf. p. 63, where Schweizer hesitates in his judgment). Among those authors who oppose the idea of exclusion we might list Wellhausen, *Das Evangelium Matthaei,* 18; Massaux, "Les relations," 268 (depending on Descamps); Hare, *Theme,* 141 n. 1; Schulz, *Stunde,* 184; Miegge, *Il sermone sul monte,* 95; Carlston, "The Things That Defile," 79-80 (though he admits the possibility that an earlier form of this *Satz* proclaimed exclusion).

123 Schniewind, *Das Evangelium nach Matthäus*[12] (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1968) 55.

124 Strack-Billerbeck, *Kommentar* I, 249; IV, 2, 1131.

125 Cf. Lagrange, *Evangile selon Saint Matthieu,* 95-96, against Loisy and Holst. Davies, *Setting,* 335, also argues against the anti-Pauline sense of vs. 19 (*contra* J. Weiss); so, too, Sand, *Gesetz,* 99-100, who rejects any reference to Paul or Paulinists, although he does allow a reference to the "libertines" against whom James writes. Cf. what was said in n. 38 of Chapter I. It is surprising to see how often the reference to Paul or Hellenists is affirmed even in contemporary scholarship: see, e.g., T. W. Manson, *The Sayings of Jesus* (London: SCM, 1971) 154; Brandon, *The Fall,* 234; and R. Bultmann, *Theology of the New Testament* (London: SCM, 1965) I, 54. — Lagrange observes that the point in question in vs. 19 seems to be practical and didactic negligence of small laws rather than systematic opposition to *the* Law or to its main parts (which according to the spirit of vs. 19 would certainly involve a more severe penalty than a low place in the Kingdom).

126 On *didaskō,* cf. K. Rengstorf, "didaskō," *TDNT* II, 138.

(divine) instructions the commandments of men. In 28:15, the guards at the tomb do as they are instructed by the chief priests and elders, i.e., they lie. But, in Mt, the disciples are never said to teach during the public ministry. In ch. 10 (the missionary discourse), they are charged to imitate Jesus (as seen in chs. 5-9) in preaching (10:7) and healing (10:8); but nothing is said about teaching. That is reserved to the great commission at the end of the gospel, when the eleven are charged to teach all the nations whatever Jesus commanded (28:20). This reservation seems to be in line with Mt's carefully ordered schema of salvation-history. Before the resurrection, Jesus alone is the one of whom the action of teaching (in Christian eyes) can be legitimately predicated.

This leaves us with the two occurrences in 5:19. The use of *didaskō* in a positive sense in the second half of vs. 19 might indicate that the author is thinking of the teaching activity of Christians after the resurrection. But this is only a possibility; we should not press schematic patterns too far. Mt could also understand the verse (within the framework of the sacred past of Jesus) as Jesus' expression of firm loyalty to the Law during his public ministry.

The combination of doing and teaching in vs. 19 should be noted. It reflects an obvious preoccupation of Mt.[127] The older rabbinic view had been that practical observance of the Law was more important than study of the Law. But, after Hadrian's edict forbidding the study of the Torah, the rabbis at Lydda under Akiba decided that study was more important, since study led to practice. This became the dominant view.[128] By placing doing before teaching, Mt may possibly be emphasizing the importance of the former.

Kaleō. Many NT passages refer to God as the one who calls and to Christians as the called, so much so that K. L. Schmidt says that *kaleō* is for the NT a technical term for the process of salvation. He concludes that we can assume that there is an element of the technical usage even in passages where it is not obvious.[129] Be that as it may, the technical meaning seems especially applicable here, since the context seems eschatological (future tense) and the passive is a semitic circumlocution for God (cf. the beatitudes). W. Bauer notes that very often the emphasis is to be placed less on the fact that the name is such-and-such than on the fact that the bearer of the name actually *is* what the name *says* about him; "to be named" approaches "to be."[130] The reference may well be to

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[127] Cf. n. 61 of Chapter III.

[128] For the whole controversy, cf. Strack-Billerbeck, *Kommentar* III, 84-86. H. Windisch, "Die Sprüche vom Eingehen in das Reich Gottes," *ZNW* 27 (1928) 163-192, notes on p. 169 that 5:19 stands in strange contrast to the *Einlassbedingung*-form, as exemplified by 5:20; see below on that verse.

[129] K. L. Schmidt, "kaleō," *TDNT* III, 487-488. However, one must be wary of a "biblical theology" which sees theological nuances everywhere; cf. J. Barr, *Biblical Words for Time*[2] (London: SCM, 1969).

[130] See W. Bauer, *sub voce.* Dalman, *Jesus-Jeschua,* 61, says the equivalence of

the eschatological declaration of God at the last judgment, a judgment that attributes definitively a particular state to the one judged.

Although Mt uses *kaleō* 26×, most of the occurrences do not shed light on 5:19. There are only three other examples of the future passive form in Mt (2:23; 5:9; 21:13). Of these, only 5:9 (*hoti autoi huioi theou klēthēsontai*) refers like 5:19 to God's recompense given to men on the last day. Mt never uses *kaleō* with a predicate nominative or accusative to convey the idea of a declaration of exclusion.

Poieō. We immediately sense the difference from the *plēroō* of vs. 17. *Poieō* is certainly the more natural word for obeying a commandment or law (see under *plēroō* in vs. 17). Lohmeyer sees the difference as existing between Christ, the Lord of the Law who fulfills it (vs. 17), and the disciples, subject to the Law, who do it (vs. 19).[181] Commentators are divided on whether the reference is to the official teachers of the community or to every disciple. The appearance of "teaching" in both parts of the statement (negative and positive) makes the former more likely. The joining of doing and teaching might also be a conscious jibe at the Pharisees (cf. Mt 23:3, and n. 61 of this chapter).

Megas. Mt uses the adjective 20× in a wide variety of contexts: great joy, light, king, downfall, earthquake, faith, commandment, affliction, signs, voice, stone, etc. Mt rarely uses it of human persons, unlike *meizōn,* which is used elsewhere in treating of rank (Mt 11:11; 18:1+4 — in the Kingdom of heaven!; 23:11). Mt 20:25 speaks negatively of the great ones among the Gentiles. Then 20:26 says positively that he who wishes to be great among the disciples must become the servant. This use of *megas* is the closest to 5:19, but we must admit that it is not close enough. As with *lyō, elachistos, kaleō,* so too with *megas,* we find that while the word is witnessed elsewhere in Mt the precise sense of

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"be called" and "be," while attested in the OT, was not common in late Hebrew or Aramaic; and so we would have a conscious "biblicism" here. Dalman refers the biblicism to Jesus himself; of course, it could also be due to a conscious archaism on the part of the tradition or of the redactor; cf. the Septuagintisms of Lk. — P. Wiesen, "Zu Matth. 5,17-20," *ZNW* 3 (1902) 336-352, emphasizes on p. 348 that the phrase *en tē$_i$ basileia$_i$* modifies the verb, not the adjective. The meaning, he claims, is that the judgment is made in the Kingdom, or from the standpoint of the Kingdom (i.e., by God), and not that the person will be least-in-the-Kingdom. Thus, Wiesen can state that 19ab refers to exclusion from the Kingdom. This view would certainly lend much support to the interpretation of F. Dibelius. But (1) since *klēthēsetai* has in the context the meaning of "shall be declared by God on the last day," giving *en tē$_i$ basileia$_i$* Wiesen's interpretation would make it somewhat otiose; (2) the word order really does not permit us to decide what *en tē$_i$ basileia$_i$* modifies: it could be *elachistos, klēthēsetai,* or *elachistos klēthēsetai;* in fact, if *klēthēsetai* is basically equivalent to the copulative, the whole debate becomes meaningless; (3) even if it were established that the phrase modifies only the verb, that in itself would solve nothing. The same would be true in 19cd, and the whole question would return to the fundamental point: What does *elachistos* mean? In summation, we can say that, in the phrase *elachistos klēthēsetai en tē$_i$ basileia$_i$,* neither the phrase as a whole nor any of its components supports the idea of exclusion. The positive form of the verse and parallels such as Mt 11:11 definitely argue for the idea of inclusion.

usage is not typically Matthean. This is possibly a sign of pre-Matthean tradition.

There is another reason why the meaning of *megas* in 5:19 creates a difficulty for the exegete. Since Hebrew and Aramaic lack proper superlatives, we could think of *megas* as superlative, as is *elachistos*. But since *elachistos* is probably elative in meaning, *megas* could be assigned a meaning such as "very great," "highly placed," "very important" (elative sense by parallel with *elachistos*). Grundmann suggests that since 5:20 and the antitheses are aimed against the Pharisees, we should understand vs. 19 in that sense too.[132] It is not Jesus, but the Pharisees who erode the Law even as they try to set up a hedge around it by their *hᵃlākōt*. But this would put vs. 19 (least in the Kingdom) in direct contradiction to vs. 20 (shall not enter the Kingdom). So we have to leave open the possibility that vs. 19 is aimed at certain disciples. It seems unlikely that there is any allusion on the redactional level to *rab* (great), the title for a teacher, since we see that Mt disliked that title as applied to Christian teachers (cf. Mt 23:8: *mē klēthēte rabbi*).

Basileia tōn ouranōn. Mt alone among NT writers uses the phrase *basileia tōn ouranōn, ouranōn* being a respectful semitic circumlocution for the divine name.[133] *Basileia* occurs in Mt 55×; *basileia tōn ouranōn* occurs 32×; *basileia tou theou* occurs 4× (12:28; 19:24; 21:31, 43). On these four occasions, Mt is using the term common in Mk, Lk, and the rest of the NT. The fact that the two phrases are used interchangeably even in a single pericope of Mt (cf. 19:23+24!) forbids any real distinction in meaning. It is just possible, however, that Mt saw in *ouranōn* an emphasis on the place from which God's lordship descends into this world. The stress would then be plainly on God's reign, his active exercise of kingly power, rather than on a realm, a place of rule. What realm there is does not arise by natural development or human effort, but only by divine intervention. It is open to dispute whether Jesus used "God" or "Kingdom" in the original Aramaic, or whether, indeed, he used either form exclusively. The isolated nature of Matthean usage in the NT inclines us to the opinion that Jesus regularly spoke of the Kingdom of God. "Kingdom of heaven" is a sign of Matthean redaction, or at least of M.

In Mt, the concept of the Kingdom of heaven has become exceedingly complex. The Kingdom existed even in the OT. It was given to Israel;

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131 Lohmeyer, *Das Evangelium des Matthäus,* 111-112. While we would not agree with all Lohmeyer says on this verse, he does seem to be correct on this point. The focus has shifted from Jesus in vs. 17 (programmatic-eschatological *ēlthon*-word) to others (men in general? disciples in particular? Christian teachers?) in vs. 19. This only stands to reason if vs. 19 is a *Satz heiligen Rechtes,* a form for rules by which Christians (hardly Jesus!) will be judged.

132 Grundmann, "megas," *TDNT* IV, 534.

133 For what follows, cf. K. L. Schmidt, "basileia," *TDNT* I, 581-582. For a fuller treatment and more recent bibliography, see Kretzer, *Die Herrschaft.*

and, when Israel refuses to bear its fruits, it is taken away and given to the church (Mt 21:33-46, especially vs. 43). In a sense, the Kingdom was present in the person of the King from his conception and birth (1:23; 2:2; 2:6). Yet the Baptist announces the drawing near of the Kingdom (3:2), as does Jesus after him (4:17). The Kingdom has already come in the exorcisms of Jesus (12:28), yet the disciples must still pray for its final coming (6:10) and seek it (6:33). Past, present, and future are all involved in various stages of the Kingdom's coming.[134]

Some texts obviously refer to the future Kingdom (e.g., 5:20), while others demand a present reference (e.g., 12:28). But many remain ambiguous. Commentators usually interpret 11:11 as referring to the present Kingdom (the time of Jesus and of the church). Mt 18:1+4 are more difficult. While a future reference is most probable, a present nuance cannot be excluded. As for 5:19, its proximity to 5:20, its form as a *Satz heiligen Rechtes* (see below), and the future passive *klēthēsetai* all seem to favor the final Kingdom at the end of this age. Present fidelity in this world will be rewarded in the world to come.

Grammar. As for grammar, the strange unevenness of *elachistos-megas* (is *elachistos* elative? or is *megas* a semitic superlative?) might be explained by the rhetorical device of assonance (what Blass-Debrunner, 488 1c, call the "Gorgian Figure based on assonance"). That is, a word in a preceding statement may be taken up and its meaning turned to a metaphorical sense — so perhaps *elachistos.* It would make sense with *entolōn,* and it is kept (instead of the expected *mikros*) for the person involved, either for merely rhetorical reasons,[135] — or, if we follow Käsemann, for more profound theological reasons as well (*Satz heiligen Rechtes*).

As for textual criticism, there are no notable variants.

Form Criticism. As for form, there is general agreement that the style is that of a legal statement (i.e., not only does the *content* of the statement concern law, but also the *form* of the statement itself is legal).[136] General rules are often cast in the form of the Hebrew *kôl mî she* or the Aramaic *kôl ma'n dî.*[137] More precisely, Käsemann defines the form as *Sätze heiligen Rechtes,* i.e., "Sentences (or Principles) of Holy Law." The form is basically a prophetic proclamation of law. Protasis and apodosis correspond in the relationship of guilt and (eschatological) punishment (so vs. 19ab) or fulfillment of duty and (eschatological) reward (so vs. 19cd).[138] Thus we have two antithetical Sentences of Holy Law —

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134 Cf. Kretzer, *Herrschaft,* 16-17.

135 Similarly, Schniewind, *Das Evangelium nach Matthäus,* 89; cf. Berger, "Zu den sogenannten Sätzen heiligen Rechts," *NTS* 17 (1970-71) 10-40.

136 Trilling, *Israel,* 180. Lohmeyer, *Das Evangelium des Matthäus,* 111, also mentions the rules of Jewish wisdom, as seen in the late psalms, proverbs, and the Talmud.

137 Schlatter, *Der Evangelist Matthäus,* 157.

138 Käsemann, "The Beginnings," especially 19-23; also Wrege, *Überlieferungs-*

or perhaps better, a double Sentence of Holy Law. Other examples of the form include Mt 16:19 and Jn 20:23.[139] As for the complicated question of the origin of 5:19 in the tradition, we will take up that question in Part Two of this section.

Having come to the end of our philological analysis of 5:19, we may summarize the salient points of our investigation, points that may prove useful for our attempt to discern tradition from redaction in Part Two of this section. (1) Mt 5:19 seems to have a legal or quasi-legal form, announcing how infidelity or fidelity to the commandments will be rewarded or punished on the last day. (2) The commandments referred to probably go back (at least in Mt's redaction) to the yod and the stroke of vs. 18. (3) The correspondence of *elachistōn* and *elachistos* may be explained by rhetoric or by the form of a *Satz heiligen Rechtes*. But, for some reason, the correspondence is not kept in vs. 19cd. (4) *Elachistos*, and indeed the whole phrase in vs. 19, cannot be pressed into meaning "excluded from the Kingdom." (5) The action of teaching refers not to Jesus but to the disciples of Jesus (for Mt, an unusual usage if it refers to the public ministry of Jesus). (6) *Klēthēsetai* refers to final judgment on the last day. (7) The *basileia* is to be taken as the full, final realization of the Kingdom at the end of time.

We should also note certain tensions or inconsistencies in 5:19 that call for some explanation. (1) A number of words (*lyō, elachistos, kaleō, megas*), while appearing elsewhere in Mt, do not have a typically Matthean sense here. (2) A law that threatens a transgressor with a low place within the Kingdom is a strange kind of threat. (3) Mt 5:19c is truncated and so spoils the balance of the double *Satz*; the reciprocal relationship of *elachistōn-elachistos* is not reflected in 5:19cd.

Part Two: **Tradition and Redaction of Mt 5:19**

Once again, we are faced with the problem of trying to distinguish tradition and redaction in a logion for which we have no synoptic parallel. But, as before, we have the double-pronged approach of applying

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geschichte, 41; Hamerton-Kelly, "Attitudes," 23; cf. Dupont, *Les Béatitudes* II, 375. But see the critique of Käsemann's theory by Berger, "Zu den sogenannten," 10-40, especially 25-27. The quarrel, however, seems to be more over the origin of the form (legal or apocalyptic-sapiential *Sitz im Leben*). The use in the NT seems fairly clear. Even Berger uses the term "Gesetz" (in quotation marks), and it seems difficult to avoid all legal nuance when the apodosis proclaims how a person will be judged on the last day.

[139] We mentioned in n. 44 of this chapter that Lührmann, *Redaktion*, 107-117, sees 5:18-19 as a larger form (introductory eschatological thesis followed by two antithetical conditional statements). But his claim that such a form can be traced back to Q^{mt} rests on the supposed parallel in Mt 18:15-18, which is not really a perfect parallel. Mt 16:19 and Jn 20:22-23 might better be used to illustrate the precise pattern of 5:18-19.

what we have learned in vss. 18 and 17 and combining these insights with the philological data of vs. 19. Since the mass of data surrounding vs. 19 can become quite confusing, we shall treat the principal questions concerning 5:19 in the following order: (1) Is 5:19 a pure creation of Mt? (2) If 5:19 is traditional, was it already joined to 5:18 in Q? (3) What was the origin and precise *Sitz im Leben* of 5:19? (4) What meaning can it have for Mt? (5) What redactional interventions might be discerned in the wording of 5:19?

First, then, before we ask the question of tradition *versus* redaction, we must ask whether 5:19 might not be entirely the product of Mt's redactional activity. The consensus of scholarly opinion seems to be against the hypothesis of a creation by the redactor.[140] If Mt 5:19 were completely a Matthean creation, one would expect it to fit well into its context. Yet this does not seem to be the case. Mt has carefully redacted vs. 18 so that it refers to the validity of the slightest part of the Law up to the apocalyptic *Wende der Zeit.* Of this, vs. 19 seems to know nothing. Rather, the moderate sanction of having a very low place in the Kingdom seems a strange sequel to the firm statement of vs. 18. The moderation of vs. 19 also seems to fit ill with vs. 20 (which is probably a Matthean creation), since vs. 20 threatens total exclusion from the Kingdom. Since 5:19 seems to stand in a certain tension to both 5:18 and 5:20, and since it does not seem to correspond to Mt's own redactional interests, probability lies on the side of its being traditional material. But we find tension not only with the context but also within the verse itself. The three points of tension or roughness we mentioned at the end of Part One of this section argue for 5:19's being traditional. Unevenness in a verse is usually a sign of redacted tradition rather than of a purely redactional creation.

We move to our second question. If 5:19 does come from pre-Matthean tradition, are there grounds for holding it was already joined to 5:18 in Q? At first glance, we might rather say that there are grounds for saying it was *not* joined to 5:18 in Q. For example, *toutōn* might be dismissed as a semitism, and so it would be a mistake to look for an antecedent to which it could refer. Obviously, as far as Mt's redaction is concerned, it is better methodology to accept the Greek text as

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140 Schürmann, "'Wer daher'," 238; on 239 n. 7 he names P. Wernle, G. Müller, R. Bultmann, and J. Dupont as holding that 5:19 was derived from Q. Descamps, "Essai d'interprétation," is firm on vs. 19's being of different origin than vs. 18 (p. 163). Yet he would perhaps admit that the two verses came to Mt already united (cf. pp. 170, 173). Others who hold for some connection between 5:18 and 5:19 in the pre-Matthean tradition include Wrege, *Überlieferungsgeschichte,* 41 (though he fails to sense the tension between the two verses). G. Harder, "Jesus und das Gesetz (Matthäus 5,17-20)," *Abhandlungen zum christlich.-jüdischen Dialog 2* (Munich: Kaiser, 1967) 105-118, hesitates over the origin of 5:19 (p. 106) but then seems to incline towards union with 5:18 in Q (p. 107). For a review of all the various recent theories on the origin of 5:19 and of 5:17-20 as a whole, cf. Dupont, *Les Béatitudes* III, 251 n. 2.

Greek, ask whether it can be understood sensibly as Greek, and then appeal to a semitism only if the Greek will not yield sense as it stands. *Toutōn* makes perfect sense if it refers to the *iōta* and *keraia* of 5:18, and so there is no need to appeal to a hypothetical Aramaic substratum in order to explain it.[141] Hypotheses, like miracles, are not to be multiplied without necessity. This holds even for the pre-Matthean tradition. The position that *toutōn* has no point of reference and therefore must be a semitism is established only if one first establishes that 5:19 circulated independently of 5:18. And the need to understand *toutōn* as having no point of reference would perdure only as long as 5:19 circulated alone. Once 5:19 was joined to 5:18 (in Q, we think), it would be most natural to refer the *toutōn* to the yod and stroke of 5:18. Another objection to the unity of 5:18-19 in the tradition is that 5:19 contradicts 5:18. Here we must be careful about phrasing our position. It is quite true that 5:18 (especially in the tradition) seems extremely stringent and conservative, while 5:19 is more moderate and conciliatory in tone. But there is not, strictly speaking, any contradiction between them. Vs. 18 might lead us to suspect severe punishment for anyone who breaks the smallest part of the Law, but it never explicitly treats the question of punishment or even the possibility of annulling a precept which is envisioned in vs. 19. While we do sense a certain unevenness, we cannot truthfully speak of a real contradiction that would render the union of 5:18 and 5:19 in the tradition inconceivable. Especially since we are speaking of Q, there is no difficulty in conceiving a number of logia on the Law being strung together, even though they differed greatly in tone and emphasis.[142]

Various authors have propounded positive arguments for the union of 5:18-19 in Q. Lührmann argues from the set form of a thesis (introduced by an *Amēn*-formula) followed by conditional conclusions (=*Sätze heiligen Rechtes*). He claims that this pattern was already fixed in Q^{mt},

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[141] So rightly Schürmann, "'Wer daher'," 241. One should remember that even in ordinary Greek *keraia* could have the metaphorical sense of something insignificant. Banks, "Matthew's Understanding," 238-240, wants *toutōn* to refer to all the commands of Jesus, which are referred to in 5:18d, *heōs an panta genētai*. As we have seen in the treatment of vs. 18, this is an incorrect understanding of 5:18d, and consequently an incorrect understanding of *toutōn*. McConnell, *Law and Prophecy*, 31, seems to agree with Lohmeyer that the *toutōn* of 5:19 cannot refer back to the yod and stroke of 5:18 (the reason for this impossibility is never given). But then McConnell makes the rather vague judgment: "It is therefore likely that Matthew found the statements of Mt 5:18 and 19 in a source related to each other in some way." Grundmann, *Das Evangelium nach Matthäus*, 149 n. 41, also makes the statement that in the present context *toutōn* has no point of reference, and he also fails to prove his statement.

[142] We must confess a certain uneasiness with attempts to find the redactional intention or intentions governing the compiling of Q (e.g., in Lührmann's *Redaktion*, especially 93-100). We have no guarantee that Q was anything more than a collection of logia (and a few narratives) arranged simply according to topics and catchwords, without any overarching redactional theology. That Q was capable of juxtaposing vastly differing views on the Law without any mediating interpretation is arguable

but his argument from Mt 18:15-18 is weak.[143] Trilling notes that 5:19 threatens to espouse a nomistic position, a position Mt carefully avoided in redacting 5:18. The only reason Trilling can see why Mt took over the troublesome 5:19 was that it had been already joined to 5:18 in the tradition.[144] Among recent authors, the critic who has argued at greatest length for a pre-Matthean unity has been Schürmann. Unfortunately, we cannot agree with all of his arguments. For example, he rests part of his case on the view that Lk 16:17 gives the more stringent, and therefore more original form of Mt 5:18.[145] Another weakness of his argumentation is that he goes too far in trying to reconstruct the whole Q-context behind Lk 16:14-18 and Mt 5:17-20, 32. "Linguistic reminiscences" have to be called upon to buttress the theory, so that the reader comes away with the sense of a complicated hypothesis constructed on tenuous grounds.[146] Yet we think that some of Schürmann's arguments can be adapted to fit our view of Mt 5:18-19.[147] (1) Both Mt 5:18bc (the primitive logion) and 5:19 are logia on the Law which represent ideas that either embarrass Mt or at least are foreign to his own redactional interests. Mt, of course, could have gathered together these two irksome legal logia from different sources or from different places in Q — but to what purpose? To create difficulties for himself? A more probable explanation is that 5:19 was already joined to 5:18 in Q. (2) To take the argument of number (1) a little further: 5:18bc was obviously unacceptable to Mt as it stood. He carefully redacted the verse in order to adapt it to his theology of Law and salvation-history. As we will see, Mt made no major intervention in 5:19ab, perhaps because the recalcitrant verse was so idiosyncratic in content (not to mention its being expressed in the fixed form of a

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from Lk 16:17-18, as compared with Mt 5:18, 32. The two gospels make it probable that in Q the logion revoking divorce stood in fairly close proximity to a logion proclaiming the perdurance of the Mosaic Law in its smallest parts (the primitive Mt 5:18bc!). So much for the redactional theology of Q.

[143] Lührmann, *Redaktion*, 107-120.

[144] Trilling, *Israel*, 182-183; while Trilling is fairly sure that these verses were joined before Mt, he is not totally convinced by Schürmann's article that the original position of Mt 5:19 in Q was right after Lk 16:17. — We might note in passing that Sand, *Gesetz*, is not completely clear on this point. On p. 36 n. 26 he holds with Schweizer that vs. 18 circulated as an isolated logion; he also states that he is unconvinced by Schürmann's proof that Mt 5:17-20ff is dependent on the context of Lk 16:17. But on p. 99 he seems to agree with G. Barth that 5:19 comes from Q.

[145] Schürmann, "'Wer daher'," 241. We think this position forces Schürmann's argument into an internal contradiction towards the end of the article. Since he holds that Lk has taken over the sharper, more original form of Lk 16:17 / Mt 5:18, he cannot really explain why Lk should then omit the milder logion, Mt 5:19. His attempt to explain why Lk kept 16:14-18 in his own gospel while omitting Mt 5:19 (cf. pp. 248-249) is weak. We think Schürmann's difficulty confirms our view that Mt 5:18bc is the primitive form of the logion, while Lk 16:17 is a Lukan reformulation that avoids affirming the perennial validity of the Law.

[146] *Ibid.*, 243-246.

[147] *Ibid.*, 240-241.

Satz) that it almost defied modification. Unlike the modified 5:18, vs. 19 resembles an undigested morsel in our text. The only probable explanation of this state of affairs seems to be that 5:19 was taken over bodily because it had been tied to 5:18 in the tradition. (3) And how was it tied to 5:18? Precisely as a conclusion to a thesis. This is clearer when we keep in mind that we are talking of the primitive logion 5:18bc. Notice how even *toutōn* has a clearer reference when it follows the primitive form of 5:18:

5:18b. Until heaven and earth pass away
18c. not one yod or stroke shall pass from the Law

5:19a. Therefore, whoever annuls one of these least commandments and so teaches men
19b. shall be called least in the kingdom.

While some inconsistency in tone between the two verses still remains (harsh and unbending *versus* moderate and compromising), they fit together fairly well in the thesis-conclusion pattern. It is rather difficult to imagine Mt joining 5:18 and 5:19 together in this thesis-conclusion pattern and at the same time weakening the connection between thesis and conclusion through his redaction of 5:18. We grant, of course, that, in the absence of synoptic parallels, no argument can be absolutely conclusive. But we hold that the weight of converging probabilities is on the side of the unity of 5:18-19 in Q.

This brings us to our third question. Granted that 5:19 was joined to 5:18bc in Q, what is the ultimate origin and *Sitz im Leben* of 5:19? Following the lead of Descamps[148] and Schürmann,[149] we think that 5:19 and its union with 5:18 should be traced back to debates among various tendencies within the primitive Jewish-Christian community (rather than to an attack by strict Jewish-Christians upon "Hellenists" or Gentile Christians). In 5:18bc we have the severe view of stringent Jewish-Christian tendencies. While the penalty for annulling a yod or stroke is not mentioned in 5:18, one might well imagine the sanction to be severe. Mt 5:19 is the answer or corrective of a more moderate Jewish-Christian group,[150] which tries to strike a balance between the "die-hards" and the "radicals" — and arrives at a rather unusual, not to say idiosyncratic, view. The milder tendency in Jewish Christianity was willing to take over the thesis of the stringent tendency, but the moderates softened the principle by drawing from it a practical conclusion that was not as drastic as one might have expected. The result

[148] Descamps, "Essai d'interprétation," 163, 168, 172.
[149] Schürmann, " 'Wer daher', " 249-250.
[150] Descamps, "Essai d'interprétation," 172, gives as a possible example of this moderate Jewish Christianity the position of St. Peter.

was a position that was neither strict Jewish Christianity (annulling a small commandment does not result in the direst of consequences) nor total freedom from the Mosaic Law (neglect of a small commandment will result in a very low place in the Kingdom). This attempt to blunt the sharp edge of Jewish Christianity, while saving its principle, produced a curiosity piece, one might even say a fossil, now embedded in Mt 5:19. The logion was probably directed originally against more stringent Jewish Christians, though we cannot exclude the possibility that the opponents of the moderates were rather Jewish Pharisees, against whose zealous attacks the moderates had to defend their supposedly "liberal" stance (thus it was ever with moderates). Or again, it is possible that the "moderates" were trying to prevent the strict Jewish Christians from reading the truly "liberal" element out of the church. We have to admit that we cannot choose with certainty among these possibilities. Neither can we be sure whether the moderates attached 5:19 to 5:18bc from the beginning, or whether the welding together of thesis and conclusion occurred later, even as late as Q itself.[151]

Granted that vs. 19 originated in a moderate Jewish-Christian group and that it has an apologetic purpose, can we determine its *Sitz im Leben* more exactly? Descamps suggests that the concern with teaching and doing, the distinction of great and small commandments, and the theme of different degrees of rewards in the Kingdom reflect a catechetical or parenetic setting. Besides serving as an apologia to some opposing group, perhaps 5:19 also served as an exhortation and admonition to the official teachers of the community to be faithful in work and word. The parenetic note of reward makes this likely.

Of course, there is always the further possibility that the saying stems ultimately from Jesus, who also had to defend himself from the criticism of the Pharisees. Then again, Jesus could also have made this statement to keep his own disciples from exaggerated enthusiasm over his sovereign liberty vis-à-vis the Law.[152] Both stringent and moderate Jewish Christians probably appealed to various sayings of Jesus, since his own attitude doubtlessly struck observers as ambiguous. Once again,

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[151] The only great difference here would be in the interpretation of *toutōn*. If the union existed from the beginning, *toutōn* always referred back to the yod and stroke. If 5:19 originally circulated alone, *toutōn* could be seen as a semitism. But especially once the logion was translated into Greek, the awkwardness of the *toutōn* would have been evident. The natural tendency would be to find another logion that would be a point of reference (5:18bc).

[152] So Windisch, *Der Sinn*, 54. As we might expect, Banks, "Matthew's Understanding," 240, states: "Quite possibly, then, the original context of the saying behind 5:19 (5:19 itself being Matthew's reiteration of it) was also in the ministry of Jesus." How Banks gets to the saying "behind" 5:19 is never too clear. To say that Jesus *might* have said *something* like 5:19 contributes little to the decision as to whether he did in fact say this or that.

though, we must remark that the determination of the *ipsissima verba Jesu* lies beyond the intent of this thesis.

We now come to our fourth question. Even granting that 5:19 was joined to 5:18 in Q, we cannot think that Mt would have simply taken over 5:19 if it made no sense to him whatever, or if it flatly contradicted his own position. What acceptable meaning could Mt read in (or into) 5:19? We suggest that he may have seen two different uses of the verse, corresponding to his two horizons of (1) the past "life of Jesus" and (2) the typological meaning for the church of his own day.[153] (1) The first function of the verse would be within Mt's *heilsgeschichtliche* schema. During his public ministry, Jesus not only was a faithful observer of the Law but also exhorted others to faithfulness (Mt 23:2-3 might fit here). We are not too far from Paul's idea of Christ's being the *diakonon ... peritomēs hyper alētheias theou, eis to bebaiōsai tas epaggelias tōn paterōn* (Rom 15:8). (2) The second function of the verse might be a typological, parenetic one, addressed across the decades to the Christian scribes of Mt's own community.[154] They may no longer be proclaiming circumcision and the food laws as binding, but they are to be faithful in doing and teaching all that Christ commanded (cf. Mt 28:20a) — and what Christ commanded certainly included important parts of the Mosaic Law.

This brings us to our fifth and final question. We have said that, at first glance, it seems that Mt has taken over 5:19 (or at least 5:19ab) from the tradition more or less unchanged. Can we, though, find any redactional alterations? First, we might ask whether Mt is responsible for the two-part schema of the verbs (*lysēi ... didaxēi, poiēsēi ... didaxēi*). Did the original logion speak only of annulling and doing, and did Mt add the emphasis on teaching? The addition would certainly reflect his own interests. And *didaxēi houtōs tous anthrōpous* does seem to "limp" awkwardly behind the rest of 5:19a. More interestingly still, if we delete the

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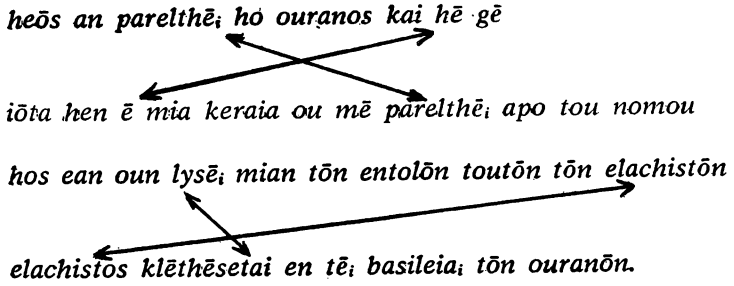
[153] Cf. n. 13 in Chapter II. Wellhausen, *Das Evangelium Matthaei*, 18, sees a reference *only* to Christian scribes in the church. On the contrary, if one were to doubt the presence of one of the two horizons here, it would be the second, typological one. This holds *a fortiori* for Mt 23:2-3, which, in its strict literal sense, holds true only of the sacred past of Jesus' public ministry.

[154] That Mt knew Christian scribes seems indicated by such passages as 7:29 (*autōn!*); 13:52; 23:34, as well as by Mt's own scribal activity. However, we do not think it is correct to see in *elachistos* and *megas* degrees of honor or office in the church (although such a possibility cannot be completely excluded). As far as the meaning of the verse in the tradition goes, the form of a *Satz heiligen Rechtes* normally has the apodosis referring to the action of God on the last day, be it reward or punishment. This sense is clear here in *klēthēsetai*: future tense and theological passive. There is no reason to think that the force of *klēthēsetai* (cf. 5:9) or the whole thrust of the *Satz*-form was lost on Mt. — P. Minear, "False Prophecy and Hypocrisy in the Gospel of Matthew," in *Neues Testament und Kirche* (ed. J. Gnilka; Freiburg: Herder, 1974) 76-93, suggests on p. 85 that 5:19 is aimed at the Christian prophet. But Minear understands such a Christian prophet to have a teaching role.

references to teaching in 19ab, we get a chiasm similar to the one in 5:18bc:


heōs an parelthēi hó ouranos kai hē gē
iōta hen ē mia keraia ou mē parelthēi apo tou nomou
hos ean oun lysēi mian tōn entolōn toutōn tōn elachistōn
elachistos klēthēsetai en tēi basileiai tōn ouranōn.

But, as Conzelmann points out, *poiein kai didaskein* form a stock phrase found in a number of traditions (cf. Mk 6:30; Acts 1:1; also though not coordinated by *kai*, Mt 28:15).[155] So we must remain unsure about labeling the references to teaching as redactional.

Our second attempt to find redactional activity in 5:19 starts from the observation that we have in vs. 19 the case of a double *Satz heiligen Rechtes*, one member negative and one positive. The negative *Satz* 19ab is put back-to-back with the positive *Satz* 19cd. Now, in itself, this doubling need not arouse suspicion. We find full or partial parallels to this form in Mt 12:31-32; Mt 16:19; and Mt 18:3-5, 10-14, 15-18. It is possible, of course, that in each of these cases the precise form is due to Matthean redaction. But we already have the form — at least roughly — in Mk 8:35 (= Mt 16:25; Lk 9:24); Mk 10:43-44 (= Mt 20:26-27); Mk 4:25 (= Mt 13:12; Lk 8:18). However, when we take a closer look, we see that 19cd (1) abbreviates the protasis form given in full in 19a; (2) puts as the predicate nominative of 19d the positive form *megas*, which clashes with the superlative form *elachistos;*[156] and (3) fails to supply a corresponding form for *megas* in 19c. The carefully constructed verbal correspondence of 19ab is not repeated in the imperfect antithesis of 19cd. Could it be that Mt formulated vs. 19cd to complement 19ab with a more positive expression of the same *Satz heiligen Rechtes*? It is a tempting hypothesis

[155] Conzelmann, *Die Mitte der Zeit*, 207 n. 3, speaking of double formulas in general. But Conzelmann also notes that one must decide in individual cases whether the double formula is just rhetorical or really expressive of two distinct ideas. The latter seems to be the case in Mt, who stresses the importance of both saying and doing (cf. 7:21-23; 23:3). Schürmann, "'Wer daher'," 242-243, does suggest that the mention of teaching is redactional; against his view is Lange, *Erscheinen*, 323 n. 40.

[156] It would seem that, whatever the reason for the superlative form of *elachistos* (true superlative, elative sense, Gorgian figure), the same reason should have been operative in vs. 19d — if it was formulated at the same time.

— but, in the absence of synoptic parallels, it remains only a hypothesis[157]

There is a third possibility of seeing Mt's redactional intervention in vs. 19 — an intervention that is almost certain. *Basileia tōn ouranōn* stands in place of *basileia tou theou*, a form rarely used by Mt. Of course, we cannot be absolutely sure that *ouranōn* was not in the pre-Matthean tradition. But, if we are correct in assuming that 5:19 does come from Q, then it seems certain that *tou theou* was the original form of the phrase. Among the written sources and documents of the NT, Mt is the only document known to us that uses the form *tōn ouranōn*. In summation, then, we must admit that, with the obvious exception of *tōn ouranōn*, our attempts to discern Matthean redaction remain very hypothetical. After our study of 5:20, we shall return to the question of the pre-Matthean tradition, this time in terms of the whole pericope as a unit. When we put together our conclusions about the individual verses, we shall see whether any of our suggestions about vs. 19 receives additional support from an over-view of the entire pericope.

SECTION D: Mt 5:20

Part One: **Philological and Historical Data for Mt 5:20**

Gar. Again we should beware of giving too much weight to what can be a colorless connective particle. Too many exegetes use it to argue that vs. 20 must have been originally joined to vs. 17.[158]

Hymin. We have here the first direct reference to the disciples since vs. 18a. In fact, vs. 20 is the only verse in 5:17-20 which focuses completely on the disciples (addressed in the second person plural).

Legō gar hymin hoti. Perhaps the function of this introductory formula is to make the saying an emphatic summary of the statements, demands, and promises of the preceding verses. It is a "clearing of the throat," a new beginning which also is a summary of what has gone before.[159]

Perisseuō. The basic meaning of the verb in its intransitive use is: to be present in abundance, to be extremely rich or abundant, to be more than enough, to surpass, to abound, to exceed, to grow.[160] The verb is used in the NT predominantly in a theological context, of spiritual abun-

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[157] Cf. n. 139 of this chapter.

[158] So, among others, M'Neile, *The Gospel According to St. Matthew*, 60. — Trilling, *Israel* (third edition, p. 183) shifts his explanation of the relation between 5:19 and 5:20 from that given in the first edition (p. 156). But in neither edition does he seem to be totally satisfied with his own explanation.

[159] Hasler, *Amen*, 79, thinks Mt took the introductory formula from Q; but his proof is not very strong.

[160] For what follows, cf. F. Hauck, "perisseuō," *TDNT* VI, 59.

dance. Used in this way, *perisseuō* often connotes (1) a fullness present and proclaimed in the age of salvation, as compared with the old aeon, or (2) a new standard that is required in the new age. To this extent, *perisseuō* is an eschatological catchword, and fits in well with the eschatological ethic of the Sermon on the Mount and the eschatological coloring of 5:17-19. The justice which is required for participation in the Kingdom of heaven must surpass even the highest achievements of the past as exemplified by the Matthean representatives of Jewish piety, the scribes and the Pharisees. The examples from the rest of the NT and from non-biblical Greek show that *perisseuō* need not always carry a strictly quantitative meaning. But the question of quantity (more stringent demands, greater effort) *versus* quality (spirit of radical obedience and total love) is still debated in regard to 5:20. Bonnard may be right when he observes that, in our passage, one need not exclude the other.[161] Certainly, the antitheses reflect both aspects (cf. 5:40-42 on the one hand, and 5:44a on the other).

Dikaiosynē. When we studied *plērōsai* in 5:17, 3:15 obliged us to study all the examples of Mt's use of *dikaiosynē.* Therefore, it suffices to recall here that Mt knows the two basic OT meanings of the term: the saving activity of God and the moral activity of the man who does God's will. Mt 5:20 obviously employs the second meaning (*hymōn hē dikaiosynē* as a condition for entrance into the Kingdom).[162] On the one hand, this Christian *dikaiosynē* differed from the meaning of the term in Greek and Hellenistic ethics, in that the Christian *dikaiosynē* was based on a fundamental relationship to a personal God who reveals himself and his will through historical revelation. On the other hand, Christian *dikaiosynē* differed (*perisseusē*$_i$ ... *pleion!*) from the popular rabbinic view which stressed a punctilious fulfillment of legal prescriptions with a view to gaining merit. For the rabbis, the important thing was to gain enough merit to outweigh one's guilt at the final judgment. If merit acquired outweighed guilt contracted, a man was judged just in God's eyes. The basic means of acquiring merit was a careful observance of all laws, great and small alike. Though interior dispositions could increase the value of the observance, they were accidental.[163] In 5:20, then, Jesus is presented as opposing the justice of the disciples to that of the scribes and Pharisees.[164] As is clear from the gospel taken in its entirety, Mt's

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[161] Bonnard, *L'Evangile selon Saint Matthieu,* 62; so, too, McConnell, *Law and Prophecy,* 37; Massaux, "Les relations," 268-269.

[162] Note the difference in meaning between *dikaiosynē* as condition for salvation (5:20) and *dikaiosynē* as saving activity of God (5:6). Cf. Kretzer, *Herrschaft,* 295-296; also, J. Ziesler, *The Meaning of Righteousness in Paul* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1972) 132-134. Hare, *Theme,* 131 n. 1, holds that *dikaiosynē* is Mt's abstract form of *poiein to thelēma tou patros;* this certainly holds true of 5:20.

[163] Cf. Strack-Billerbeck, *Kommentar* I, 250-252.

[164] Note the abbreviated genitive of comparison; one would have expected "abound

conception of the "plus" in the disciples' justice is not a bigger and better Pharisaism, an ever more minute, punctilious observance of small points.[165] What constitutes the "more abundant" justice of the disciple is explained by the antitheses which follow. What Jesus demands is a radical interiorization, a total obedience to God, a complete self-giving to neighbor, that carries the ethical thrust of the Law to its God-willed conclusion, even when this means in some cases abrogating the letter of the Law. This radicalization and partial abrogation is possible because the eschatological hour is at hand. The power of God's reign is already active in this aeon in the person, teaching, and action of Jesus, and will break in decisively at the death-resurrection, with the constitution of a new, separate community of disciples (Mt 28:16-20 as the founding of the church). Consequently, the demand Jesus makes upon his disciples here is an eschatological demand. The justice demanded is the requirement for entrance into the eschatological Kingdom (5:20c). This new "quality" of Christian justice does not exclude the possibility that this justice might also involve new "quantity," i.e., more stringent demands in the realm of concrete, exterior activity. Radical conversion and total self-giving naturally result in an abundance of deeds of love. In all this, the important point is that in 5:20 Mt does take over the basic OT and rabbinic concept of *dikaiosynē*, while at the same time he modifies it by making it a vehicle of Jesus' own eschatological demand. Ultimately, what is new about Christian justice is Christ himself, who confronts his disciple with the radical demand, "Follow me" (cf. Mt 19:21, and the *hysterō* — the opposite of *perisseuō* — in 19:20).[166]

It is not by accident that *dikaiosynē* appears in this pivotal verse, 5:20. Dupont has gone so far as to say that, while the general theme of Lk's Sermon on the Plain is love, the general theme of Mt's Sermon on the Mount is justice.[167] Whether we wish to go so far or not, *dikaiosynē*

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more than *that of* the scribes" etc. This elliptical comparison could be due to an Aramaic background, but examples with *perisseuō* are also found in regular Greek.

[165] Cf. Schmithals, *Paul and James*, 110.

[166] Cf. Dupont, *Les Béatitudes* I, 132 n. 1. Dupont thinks that the pericope of the rich young man is the best commentary on 5:20. Schnackenburg, "Die Vollkommenheit des Christen nach den Evangelien," *Geist und Leben* 32 (1959) 424, points to the *ti perisson poieite* of 5:47. Barth, "Gesetzesverständnis," 74, also refers to 5:47 to emphasize the connection between the more abundant justice of 5:20 and the command of love. — As we have already pointed out (cf. the treatment of 5:17, Part Two), the love command is *not* the acme of Jesus' eschatological demand; following Jesus is. In 19:18-19, Mt adds the love command to a number of commandments of the decalogue. For Mt, the love command is the summation and center of all these commands; but it still stands with the other commands of the Torah. After the young man states he has kept all these (*panta tauta*, including, therefore, the love command!), he can still ask, *ti eti hysterō* (vs. 20). To this, Jesus replies, *pōlēson ... kai akolouthei moi* (vs. 21).

[167] Dupont, *Les Béatitudes* III, 209. One fact that causes us to hesitate about so sweeping a statement is that the word appears almost entirely in the first half of the Sermon (5:6, 10, 20; 6:1). In the second half it appears only once (6:33), and never

(the Christian, more abundant *dikaiosynē*) certainly sums up well the concerns of the first part of ch. 5, especially 5:17-19, reinterprets the Law-concerns of 5:17-19 in terms of justice, and defines as justice the concerns of the second part of the chapter (5:21-48, the antitheses).

Pleion. The word is the accusative of the comparative degree of *polys,* used as an adverb: "more," "in greater measure," "to a greater degree." *Pleion* might be considered redundant with *perisseuō.* But, since *perisseuō* need not always carry a comparative sense, *pleion* serves a useful function.

Grammateis kai Pharisaioi. Here we must distinguish carefully between history and theology.[168] The phrase is practically a theologoumenon in Mt. Mt speaks of "the scribes and the Pharisees" (in that order) nine times (5:20; 12:38; 23:2, 13, 15, 23, 25, 27, 29). Mk never has Mt's typical order. Twice Mk speaks of "the Pharisees and (some of) the scribes" (7:1, 5), and once he speaks — with amazing historical accuracy — of "the scribes of the Pharisees" (2:16). Lk has "the Pharisees and the scribes" in 5:30 and 15:2, and "the scribes and the Pharisees" in 5:21; 6:7; and 11:53 (never with a direct Matthean parallel). In 5:17; 7:30; and 14:3, Lk puts the Pharisees together with the *nomikoi* (or *nomodidaskaloi*); again, there is no direct parallel in Mt. Mt, on the other hand, uses the order "Pharisees and scribes" only in 15:1, in dependence on Mk's order. Otherwise, he always uses the fixed formula, "scribes and Pharisees." His emphasis on this particular order is peculiar to him, and is clearly redactional.

Mt does not distinguish between scribes and Pharisees, as can be seen from their coordination in the woes of ch. 23 (the Lukan parallels suggest that Q still distinguished between the two).[169] "Scribes and Pharisees" is definitely a fixed theological formula in Mt. What does the formula mean? To Mt, the scribes and Pharisees are the official representatives of Jewish theology and piety, representatives who lead the attack against Jesus and who in return bear the brunt of Jesus' rebuke. Jesus' greatest charge against them is hypocrisy: they say but do not do, and what they do they do only for outward show and human applause (Mt 23:3ff). Exegetes differ, however, on a more precise estima-

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in ch. 7. Another point that makes us doubtful is that Dupont gives all the occurrences the same meaning, while we distinguish between 5:6 and 6:33 on the one hand, and 5:10, 20, and 6:1 on the other (cf. under *plēroō* in the treatment of 5:17).

168 For what follows, cf. W. Bauer, *sub vocibus;* Strack-Billerbeck, *Kommentar* I, 250; Hummel, *Auseinandersetzung,* 12-18; and the whole work of van Tilborg, *The Jewish Leaders in Matthew,* especially 126-128 for 5:20.

169 For this reason, we must reject the attempt of Joachim Jeremias (*Bergpredigt,* 20) to divide the body of the Sermon on the Mount into three parts, according to the three groups addressed in 5:20: scribes (5:21-48, against official interpretation of scripture by the Jewish theologians); Pharisees (6:1-18, against the practice of pious Jewish laymen); "you" (6:19-7:27, the new justice of Christ's disciples). This presupposes the historical distinction between scribes and Pharisees which is not found in Mt.

tion of Mt's view of the Pharisees. Hummel, thinking of the great debate between Jewish Christianity and Judaism after A.D. 70 (when Pharisaism had gained the ascendency once and for all and the Sadducees had disappeared from scribal activity), holds that Mt sees the Pharisees as *the* great adversaries of Jesus.[170] According to this view, Mt subordinates and assimilates all other groups (scribes, elders, priests, Sadducees) to the Pharisees. In the case of the priests and elders, though, Hummel thinks Mt preserves some historical exactness. On the other hand, Walker, thinking that Mt is no longer interested in a debate with contemporary Judaism, sees all the different designations and combinations of Jewish groups (including the Pharisees) as just so many variant labels for the one theological reality which concerns Mt: Israel, the condemned generation of the time of Jesus.[171] This Israel is represented indifferently by all its official "teachers" (as Mt thinks of them). In Mt, says Walker, we find not anti-Pharisaism but "anti-Doctorism." Of the two views, we think Hummel comes closer to the truth.[172]

In any case, Mt certainly does not provide an historically accurate picture of the scribes and Pharisees as they were during the life of Jesus.[173] In fact, since the heterogeneous nature of Judaism was greatly diminished after A.D. 70 by the dominance of the Pharisees (and among them, of the school of Johanan ben Zakkai), it is difficult to recapture an exact picture of all the groups in Palestine at the time of Jesus. We are on fairly safe ground when we say that the scribes were a professional class of theologians/lawyers who had spent some time in formal study of the Law. The Pharisees were a group of pious Jews who pledged themselves to strict devotion to and observance of the Law (both oral and written). Thus, scribes and Pharisees can be neither simply identified nor absolutely separated. At the time of Jesus, the two groups partly — but not completely — overlapped. Many scribes were Pharisees in their interpretation of the Law and in the conduct of their lives, though some were Sadducees. Most Pharisees were not especially educated men. They were simple, zealous Jews belonging to a popular religious movement that followed the interpretations of the stricter scribes. But some Pharisees, as we have said, *were* scribes by profession; and so we cannot say that all Pharisees were without formal education in the Law. The Pharisees who were scribes would naturally

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[170] Hummel, *Auseinandersetzung*, 12-18, 20-22. Hummel thinks Mt de-emphasizes the scribes; he acknowledges that there is nothing wrong with a scribe *qua* scribe, since Mt's church has Christian scribes as leaders (*e contra*, R. Walker, *Heilsgeschichte*, 23).

[171] R. Walker, *Heilsgeschichte*, 17-23; accordingly, "scribe" is not a neutral concept for Mt, as Hummel claims. Walker's rejection of Christian scribes as a reality of Mt's own milieu is tied in with his view of Mt's *heilsgeschichtliche* schema.

[172] Cf. what we said in our first chapter, under points C to G.

[173] For the historical question, see especially R. Meyer - K. Weiss, "pharisaios," *TDNT* IX, 11-48, with a fine bibliography of earlier literature on 11-12.

be looked to as leaders of the movement. This complex situation is reflected with historical accuracy in Mk 2:16, if *hoi grammateis tōn Pharisaiōn* is the original reading (which it probably is). Such a distinction is unknown to Mt.

Eiserchomai. "Enter into the Kingdom" (or "enter into it," referring to the Kingdom) occurs in Mk 9:47 (where Mt 18:9 reads "into life"), 10:15 (no exact Matthean parallel; Lk 18:17), and 10:23+25 (= Mt 19:23+24; Lk 18:24+25). Besides the Markan parallels already noted, Mt has the phrase "enter into the Kingdom" at 5:20; 7:21; 18:3. Lk has no examples beyond the Markan parallels noted. Jn has one example at 3:5, and Acts has one example at 14:22. The Pauline corpus prefers to speak of "inheriting the Kingdom." The related phrase, "enter into life," occurs in Mk 9:43 (=Mt 18:8), and Mk 9:45. Besides Mt 18:8, Mt has "enter into life" at 18:9, where Mk has "Kingdom of God." Lk does not have the phrase. In general, then, we can trace back Mt's use of the two phrases to Mk. The only two places where this is not so (since Mt 18:3 has echoes of Markan tradition) are within the Sermon on the Mount, 5:20 and 7:21.

The figure, "to enter into the Kingdom of God [heaven]," is built upon two OT images.[174] The first image is the entrance of Israel into the promised land — either the historical entrance (Dt 4:1) or the entrance at the end-time (Ps. Sol. 11:2-6). This idea is also expressed by the verb *klēronomein.* The condition for entrance (or continued possession of the land) in Dt was observance of the Law of Moses (cf. Mt 5:20!). The second and more proximate image involved in 5:20 is connected with requirements of cultic purity and ethical righteousness for entrance through the temple gates (cf. the temple liturgies giving *tôrōt* of entrance: Pss 15; 24; 118:19f) or the city gates of Jerusalem — raised to an apocalyptic image in Is 26:2f. The image has been projected here onto the screen of eschatological events, and so Mt 5:20 can take its place among the eschatological and apocalyptic logia of the gospels. The corresponding rabbinic phrases are: to go (or come) into the world-to-come, to inherit or gain the world-to-come, to go into (or enter) the life of the world-to-come, to be a son of the world-to-come.[175] The moral requirement of *dikaiosynē* for entrance ties the saying more closely

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[174] For what follows, cf. J. Schneider, "erchomai [and compounds]," *TDNT* II, 676-677, and the entire article of H. Windisch, "Die Sprüche von Eingehen in das Reich Gottes," *ZNW* 27 (1928) 163-192.

[175] Cf. Strack-Billerbeck, *Kommentar* I, 252-253. Windisch, "Sprüche," 172-173, states that the precise phrase, "enter into the kingdom of heaven," is not found in rabbinic usage. On p. 174, he suggests that we may have a reply to Mt 5:20 in *Aboth* III, 11: He who desecrates the holy things, despises the feast days, breaks the covenant of our father Abraham, and forsakes the Torah, such a one, even if he has good works, has no part in the world to come. (*N. B.*: Various editions of the Mishnah have various divisions of the sayings: *Aboth*, III, 11, is also listed as III, 12, or III, 16; cf. also *Sifre* on Numbers, 15:30-31).

to the idea of temple (or city) entrance (cf. LXX Is 26:2f: *anoixate pylas, eiselthatō laos phylassōn dikaiosynēn*) than to entrance into the promised land.[176] The structure of entrance-with-moral-condition is the reason for classifying 5:20 as a statement of *Einlassbedingung* or *Eingangsbedingung*. While most of the *basileia*-sayings and *basileia*-parables in the gospels highlight the invitation, initiative, action, gift, and power of God, the *Einlassbedingung* emphasizes the moral actions required of man.[177]

Basileia tōn ouranōn. See the comments on *basileia* under vs. 19; we repeat here only the essential points. Because of the eschatological and apocalyptic background of the *Eingangsbedingung*-form, *basileia* is probably to be understood here (as in vs. 19) in the final, ultra-historical sense.[178] Hummel exaggerates, though, when he insists on making *basileia* a purely future reality in Mt.[179] As we have seen already in our investigation of 5:19, a number of Matthean passages refer to a past or present stage of the Kingdom. For example, in the explanation of the parable of the wheat and the tares (Mt 13:36-43, probably a Matthean creation), the present world seems to be the Kingdom of the Son of Man (vs. 41).[180] According to the Matthean insertion into the Markan parable of the evil caretakers of the vineyard (21:43), the *basileia tou theou* will be taken away from the Israelites and will be given to an *ethnos* bearing its fruits. Nothing is taken away which has not first been given. And it is precisely the *basileia*, not a call to the *basileia*, that is said to have been taken away from the historical Israel (to whom, we may rightly infer, it had once been given). Furthermore,

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[176] So Lohmeyer, *Das Evangelium des Matthäus*, 112. For the promised-land motif in the NT, see Heb 3:11 (cf. Ps 95:11). Cf. also the temple liturgies, in which a procession of pilgrims asks conditions for entrance to the temple, and the priest(s) answer by reciting the sacral laws of the temple. In LXX Ps 117:19f, we read: [pilgrim:] *anoixate moi pylas dikaiosynēs, eiselthōn en autais* etc.... [priest:] *hautē hē pylē tou kyriou, dikaioi eiseleusontai en autē*$_i$. Cf. further LXX Is 33:15ff; 57:13f. Windisch, "Sprüche," 184, also calls attention to the phrase, "enter into the assembly (*qᵉhal*) of Yahweh," in Dt 23:2-9, which also gives conditions for entrance into the Israelite cult community.

[177] Windisch, "Sprüche," 170. This does not mean, of course, that the parables do not also contain a call for man's response (cf. especially Mt 21:28-22:14).

[178] So, quite strongly, Strecker, *Weg*, 155.

[179] Hummel, *Auseinandersetzung*, 148-149; cf. ch. 6 (added in the second edition), 167 n. 44, where he admits Trilling may well be right in admitting a wider meaning for *basileia* in Mt. — We must take 13:36-43 and 21:43 seriously, especially since they are Matthean *Sondergut*, indeed, probably Matthean creations. Consequently, we must reject Barth's statement, "Gesetzesverständnis," 130-131 n. 6: "Das Reich Gottes ist ja für Matthäus durchweg eine zukünftige Grösse."

[180] This verse alone refutes Lange's position, stated throughout his *Erscheinen* (e.g., 175-178), that Mt has no concept of the Son of Man as the presently reigning *Kyrios* in an intermediate Kingdom (i.e., no enthronement concept). Since Lange admits that the explanation of the parable of the wheat and the tares goes back to Mt, and that the Son of Man does not simply refer to Jesus during his public ministry (cf. pp. 181-182), the Kingdom of the Son of Man must refer to the universe presently ruled over by Jesus the Cosmocrator — a Kingdom distinguished from the final Kingdom of the Father (vs. 43).

the *basileia* (the vineyard in the parable) had been given to Israel (21:33, *exedoto*) with the expectation that it would bear its fruits. The gift of the *basileia* (vineyard) is obviously a prerequisite for bearing its fruits, as is shown by the parable itself (plainly allegorized here by Mt). Correspondingly, the *ethnos* in vs. 43 can hardly be expected to bear the fruits of the *basileia* without first receiving the *basileia.* Mt sees the present church as in some way having the *basileia,* without, of course, being totally identified with it. It is, then, precisely in the material proper to Mt that we clearly see the idea of the *basileia* as present already in the history of the chosen people (of the old or new covenant). Now, as we stated above, we think *basileia tōn ouranōn* in vss. 19-20 is basically the eschatological Kingdom at the end of history. But if vs. 19 falls into Käsemann's category of "Sentences of Holy Law," and if, as we hope to show shortly, this is true also of vs. 20, we should bear in mind that the eschatological *jus talionis* is already at work in the present community of believers, where the power of the future Kingdom is already felt most plainly.[181] Note, by the way, that the final words of our pericope tie in with the last words of 5:3, 10, 19b, and 19d, thus providing a verbal unity to the first part of ch. 5. The phrase "Kingdom of heaven" disappears in the rest of ch. 5 and is taken up again towards the end of the Sermon (7:21, another *Eingangsbedingung*). Note also that another key word of 5:20, *dikaiosynē,* also provides a thread running through the first part of ch. 5.

Form Criticism. We have already suggested that 5:20, like 5:19, might fall under Käsemann's heading of "Sentences (or Principles) of Holy Law." The basic form of a *Satz heiligen Rechtes* consists of a protasis and an apodosis. (1) Some sort of protasis (in vs. 19 a relative-conditional clause, *hos ean,* in vs. 20 a simple conditional clause, *ean*) states some good or evil action of a man in this present age (annulling the least commandment, vs. 19a; doing, 19c; more abundant justice, vs. 20b). (2) The apodosis states God's eschatological judgment, which will reward or punish said man accordingly (insignificant place in the Kingdom, vs. 19b; important place, vs. 19d; exclusion from the Kingdom, vs. 20c). The final judgment by God takes place at the last day. But, as we have noted, the proclamation of the law anticipates that judgment and sets it in motion, as it were, even now, with a view to the repentance of the individual or the preservation of the community. The objection might be raised that in vs. 20c we do not have an eschatological action of God mentioned, but rather an eschatological action (or lack of action) on the part of man — i.e., entering or not entering. But from all we have seen about *Eingangsbedingungen,* it is clear that admission or exclusion from the eschatological Kingdom on the last day is the result

[181] Käsemann, "Sentences of Holy Law," 68-70.

of God's act of judging, whether the precise verb used be transitive or intransitive, active or passive. This is especially clear in the case of exclusion, since obviously it is not man but God who excludes, despite the fact that the verb at face value refers to the (negated) action of man. The all-important negation of man's action is precisely the judging action of God. So we may classify 5:20 not only as an *Eingangsbedingung* but also as a *Satz heiligen Rechtes* to which has been attached an introductory *legō gar hymin hoti.* So we have back-to-back a double *Satz heiligen Rechtes* (vs. 19) and a simple *Satz* which is also an *Eingangsbedingung* (vs. 20). As for the position of vs. 20 within the whole pericope, it appears to have a double function. It sums up all that has gone before and provides the immediate introduction to the antitheses — though the pericope seen as a unit provides the larger introduction to the antitheses. Mt 5:20 is one of the great "bridges" or transitional statements in the Sermon.

The question of the *Sitz im Leben* of 5:20 is so closely connected with the question of tradition and redaction that we shall postpone its treatment to Part Two of this section. As usual, there are no notable textual variants. We may proceed, then, to sum up the salient points of our investigation of 5:20. (1) *Legō gar hymin hoti* marks both a recapitulation and a new beginning. (2) *Perisseuō* speaks of a new abundance of right action, an abundance that befits the eschaton. While both quantitative and qualitative abundance is meant, the accent is on the new, eschatological quality of the disciples' moral lives. (3) *Dikaiosynē,* a word almost unique to Mt in the synoptic tradition, is used to sum up the "new style" of eschatological living. It is that moral conduct which fulfills Jesus' demand and God's will. Mt has made *dikaiosynē* a key word of ch. 5, and of the whole Sermon. (4) The scribes and Pharisees are presented here not in their historical reality but as a Matthean theologoumenon. They represent the official Jewish theology and piety which Jesus censures and which his disciples must transcend. (5) This transcending is no light matter. Entrance into the final Kingdom (and not just a low place in it, as in 5:19) depends on a moral life that is qualitatively and quantitatively better than that of the scribes and Pharisees. As so often in the gospel, Mt calls the disciples to stringent endeavor by emphasizing the stringent judgment that awaits them. (6) Mt 5:20 may be classified as an *Eingangsbedingung* and also as a *Satz heiligen Rechtes.*

Part Two: **Tradition and Redaction of Mt 5:20**

The questions of *Sitz im Leben* and of tradition *versus* redaction are especially difficult in 5:20, and the critics are divided. Does some ascertainable tradition lie behind 5:20, or is it purely a Matthean creation? There are two basic views on this subject.

Descamps, following Bultmann, argues that vs. 20 is a Matthean creation composed to form both a resumé and an immediate introduction to the antitheses.[182] Basing ourselves on the argumentation of Descamps, we can list three reasons for seeing 5:20 as a redactional creation. (1) There are many links between 5:20 and the rest of ch. 5: *perisseuō* and *perisson* (vs. 37 in the negative sense, and vs. 47 in the positive sense); *legō hymin,* tying in with 5:18 and with the introductory formulas of the antitheses; scribes and Pharisees (though these are not mentioned as such in the antitheses, they are precisely the ones who practice the imperfect justice demanded of the ancients); *basileia tōn ouranōn* (5:3, 10, 19b, 19d); *dikaiosynē* (5:6, 10; also 6:1). (2) A number of these catchwords are also predominantly Matthean terms: scribes and Pharisees (in that order), *basileia tōn ouranōn,* and *dikaiosynē. Dikaiosynē,* in particular, is an almost exclusively Matthean word in the synoptic tradition. The only other example is Lk 1:75. Except for 5:6 and 6:33 (verses which have a Lukan parallel, but without *dikaiosynē*), all the passages in Mt with *dikaiosynē* are also proper to Mt (3:15; 5:10; 5:20; 6:1; 21:32). (3) We have another apparently redactional verse nearby in the Sermon that also serves as the title for a well-structured section: 6:1, which introduces 6:2-18 on alms, prayer, and fasting.[183] The key word is again *dikaiosynē.* Consequently, when we consider *both* the large number of Matthean terms in 5:20 *and* the links these terms have to the rest of the chapter *and* the keystone function 5:20 plays so well within ch. 5, it is difficult to think that Mt lifted 5:20 out of the tradition. That traditional material would by accident fit so well into this pivotal position in Mt's structure is too much of a coincidence.

But we must grant to the opposite opinion that absolute certitude is impossible on this point. We cannot completely exclude the possibility that Mt took over a traditional logion and redacted it so that it would fit at 5:20. A number of exegetes (e.g., Descamps and Dupont in their earlier works, Wrege, Banks) have taken this position.[184] Certainly,

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[182] Descamps, "Essai d'interprétation," 163; note, however, that Descamps has changed his earlier view, found in *Les justes et la justice,* 120-121 and 181-183 (vs. 20 constituted the primitive introduction to the antitheses and goes back to Jesus himself). Cf. Bultmann, *Geschichte,* 143, 147, and 161. H. Braun, *Spätjüdisch-häretischer und frühchristlicher Radikalismus* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1957) II, 10 n. 1, not only argues that 5:20 comes from Mt but also denies that it could have come from Jesus.

[183] Cf. Benoit-Boismard, *Synopse* II, 138: "Comme Mt 6:1, ce logion [5:20] doit être attribué à l'ultime Rédacteur matthéen."

[184] Wrege, *Überlieferungsgeschichte,* 42-44, makes an intriguing suggestion. He thinks Mt 5:20 was originally an Aramaic logion in which the *min*-particle (reflected in *pleion* + the genitive) was not comparative but exclusive (cf. Lk 18:14, *dedikaiōmenos ... par'*). The logion perhaps circulated in a unit of tradition like the discourse of woes (Mt 23/Lk 11:37-54). Mt took over the logion (now understood in a comparative sense) and placed it before the antitheses. But Wrege's explanation does not explain why 5:20 just happens to fit so well, linguistically and structurally, into its present context. Banks, "Matthew's Understanding," 241, readily admits the many

we must admit that there is a limit as to what "Matthean" terminology and structures prove. If the Jewish-Christian tradition had ever wanted to speak in Greek about faithful observance of Jewish Law and customs, it would have been most natural for it to use the hallowed term *dikaiosynē*. Then, too, we have seen that the *Satz heiligen Rechtes* is a form which has antecedents in the OT and which is not impossible on the lips of Jesus or of the early community. Finally, the form of general principle followed by concrete illustrations (exhibited in 5:20 and 5:21-48) has been shown by D. Daube to be at home in a Jewish as well as a Greek milieu.[185] If it be true that some of the antitheses existed in a list before Mt took them over and expanded them, vs. 20 might well have served as their title and resumé in their pre-Matthean form. The question, then, is quite complex. In Volume One of *Les Béatitudes*, Dupont, for instance, considered carefully the reasons for taking vs. 20 as a Matthean creation, but finally favored a Matthean re-working of a verse taken from the source which gave him the antitheses. In Volume Three, Dupont has changed his opinion; he now favors the theory of Matthean creation.[186] And so, although we agree with Dupont's later position, we must admit that some uncertainty remains. The exegetical problem, however, is that uncertainty about origin leads to uncertainty about meaning. The idea of complete exclusion from the Kingdom strikes us as quite harsh when compared with vs. 19. We might be quick to attribute 5:20 to a strict Jewish Christianity and thus give *perisseuō* the strongly quantitative meaning of a most punctilious, indeed an all-embracing observance of the Law, a super-Pharisaism. But if we assign vs. 20 to Mt, who intends it as the title of the antitheses, *perisseuō* must have first of all the qualitative sense of a more radical observance of the intention of the Law, since some of the antitheses rescind its letter. The same meaning of *perisseuō* could also be maintained if vs. 20 existed before Mt as the title of a pre-Matthean group of antitheses. Needless to say, this uncertainty about whether vs. 20 is redactional or traditional makes any attribution of it to Jesus highly speculative.[187] As for our own view, we think Descamps argues his case very well, and so we adopt his theory as the better hypothesis[188] —

Matthean elements in 5:20; his attempt to maintain that "a traditional, if not authentic utterance, probably underlies vs. 20" is not convincing.

[185] Daube, "Three Questions," 24-27.

[186] Dupont, *Les Béatitudes* I, 133, and III, 251 n. 2. The latter passage gives a valuable survey of various positions taken by major authors.

[187] Attempting to reconstruct the "primitive" meaning of the logion can lead to strange conclusions. T. Weir, "Matthew V. 20," *ExpT* 23 (1911-12) 430-431, holds that Jesus meant: "Except your *alms* exceed those of the scribes and the Pharisees...."

[188] Since we accept as more likely the hypothesis that vs. 20 was added by the final redactor as the resumé of vss. 17-19 and as the introduction to the antitheses, there is no need to discuss whether or not vs. 20 originally followed vs. 17; the arguments for the latter view usually put too much weight on the *gar* of vs. 20.

with the understanding that we cannot completely disprove the existence of vs. 20 in some pre-Matthean tradition. But, even if we had chosen to see vs. 20 as traditional, we would have had to admit so much redactional activity on the part of Mt that it would be extremely difficult to regain the original logion. If Descamps is correct, the meaning of the verse causes no problem, despite its statement about total exclusion. Since the verse is a Matthean creation, its strictness does not reflect fierce Jewish-Christian adherence to literal observance of the smallest parts of the Mosaic Law. Rather, for Mt, 5:20 has the twofold sense which corresponds to Mt's two horizons. On the level of Mt's parenesis addressed to Christians, the verse reflects his deep concern for a whole-hearted commitment to the spirit of the Law. Insofar as Mt puts the verse into the mouth of Jesus during his public ministry, the evangelist can understand it as an expression of Jesus' fidelity to the Mosaic Law during his earthly life, a fidelity which according to Mt, he also inculcated in his disciples (cf. Mt 23:2-3, where the fidelity is to extend even to the Pharisaic *hᵃlākōt*).[189] In 5:20, of course, the fidelity is expressed in polemical terms: your justice must exceed that of the official expounders of the *hᵃlākōt*.

As for 5:20's place in Mt's larger composition, we have already noted that vs. 20 is a Janus-like hinge that both rounds off vss. 17-19 and announces the antitheses (vss. 21-48). The sense of vs. 20 is best understood from the antitheses: the surpassing justice Jesus teaches breaks through the narrow *hᵃlākōt* of the scribes and Pharisees and radicalizes the Law in its innermost intention, even when this means in some cases abolishing the letter. Strict Jewish Christianity is no more present in vs. 20 than in the antitheses themselves. Its strictness and earnestness flow from the radical nature of Jesus' call to his disciples, a call which allows no half-measures (cf. Mt 8:18-22). Mt 5:20 concerns the basic moral commitment of every disciple, so that the reward at stake is one's very entrance into the Kingdom. By contrast, 5:19 concerned only Christian teachers, and there it was a matter of warning against infidelity in minor matters; hence, the lighter sanction.

It is now time to move to a synthesis of our research on 5:17-20.

A fortiori, there is no need to discuss whether vs. 20 might have originally been at the end of ch. 5 or elsewhere; such hypotheses simply lack the data necessary for any kind of verification.

[189] One might at first doubt whether Mt distinguished such a double horizon in his parenetic material. But ch. 23 itself argues for such a distinction. Mt 23:2-3 is intelligible in Mt's theology only if it refers to the sacred past of Jesus' ministry. But 23:16-22 contravenes the letter and spirit of 23:2-3. It is an *ad hominem* attack on Pharisaic teaching on oaths, an attack meant to be heard by the church of Mt's day.

SECTION E: THE REDACTION OF MT 5:17-20

Having seen the tradition and redaction of each verse in 5:17-20, let us now summarize our position and sketch briefly our view as to how Mt subsumed traditional elements in order to express his conception of Jesus' teaching on the Law. To approach the question in an orderly way, we shall treat in turn (1) the tradition Mt received, (2) the additions or changes he made, (3) the form-critical categories of the redacted verses, and (4) the basic line of thought of the pericope in its final form.

1. *The Tradition Mt Received*

Our investigation of the individual verses suggests that the pre-Matthean tradition would have appeared somewhat like the following:

5:17a. *ouk ēlthon katalysai ton nomon ·*
b. *(ouk ēlthon katalysai) alla poiein [plērōsai?]*
5:18b. *heōs an parelthē$_i$ ho ouranos kai hē gē*
c. *iōta hen ē mia keraia ou mē parelthē$_i$ apo tou nomou*
5:19a. *hos ean oun lysē$_i$ mian tōn entolōn toutōn tōn elachistōn*
(kai didaxē$_i$ houtōs tous anthrōpous)
b. *elachistos klēthēsetai en tē$_i$ basileia$_i$ tou theou*
c. *(hos d'an poiēsē$_i$ kai didaxē$_i$*
d. *houtos megas klēthēsetai en tē$_i$ basileia$_i$ tou theou).*

A number of points remain quite uncertain. Some of the uncertainties have been indicated by parentheses or brackets: e.g., whether 5:17 stood originally in a longer or shorter form; whether it contained *plērōsai* from the beginning; whether 5:19 was originally a double or single *Satz heiligen Rechtes;* and whether it contained a separate clause dealing with teaching.

Uncertain also is the source of 5:17-19. It seems clear that 5:18 stood in Q, and we have argued that 5:19 did also, forming the conclusion(s) to 5:18's thesis. But it is impossible to make any definitive statement about 5:17. At best, all we can state is that nothing militates against the hypothesis that it stood with 5:18-19 in Q.[190] Such a theory

[190] Benoit-Boismard, *Synopse* II, 137, affirm that a primitive form of 5:17 was present in Q; their argument is based on the supposed citation of 5:17 by Marcion. But further investigation shows that this particular argument is weak. Von Harnack, "Geschichte eines programmatischen Wortes," 184, also thinks it more likely that Lk knew Mt 5:17 from Q but omitted it. However, reasoning from Tertullian's polemic against Marcion, von Harnack argues that Marcion did know Mt 5:17 — but from Mt, not from a version of Lk. What von Harnack writes in this essay should make one very wary of the Benoit-Boismard argument from Marcion. — In *Synopse* I, 46, the famous Marcionite contradiction of Mt 5:17 is quoted from Adamantius, *De recta in*

does enjoy the advantage of being the simplest solution to cover all the data. Mt has taken over and redacted 5:17-19 because he already found this statement on the Law as a unit in Q, and considered it a useful compendium of his view of the Law — provided certain changes were made.

Even in Q, the verses do not lack a certain homogeneity. *Nomos* and *entolai* set the tone for these pronouncements on the Law, and the verbs *katalyō, poieō* (or *plēroō*?), *parerchomai, lyō, poieō* (*kai didaskō*?) fit quite well this legal tone with its call for observance. The purpose of the pericope seems to have been to root an exhortation to complete fidelity to the Law in the mission, teaching, and example of Jesus. But we cannot fail to note an unevenness in the tenor of the statements. Mt 5:18 reflects a very stringent Jewish-Christian view, which has been softened by the more moderate (and perhaps later) logion of 5:19. In 5:18 and 5:19 we may find preserved two stages in the development of the theology of Mt's church. The *Sitze im Leben* of 5:18 and 5:19 would then be two different groups or two different stages of development in a Jewish-Christian community. Q (if not previous tradition) has joined the two together in a thesis-conclusion pattern — thus, for all practical purposes, allowing the moderate position to triumph. Mt 5:17 forms a solemn introduction to the thesis and its conclusions. Whether the three logia were brought together for the first time in Q, or whether Q reflects here an even earlier compilation, cannot be decided. At any rate, Q reveals itself here as a collection of various logia gathered around key themes, without all the tensions resolved. What has been wrongly said of Mt can be rightly

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deum fide II, col. 1784: *touto hoi Ioudaistai egrapsan, to ouk ēlthon katalysai ton nomon alla plērōsai. ouk houtōs de eipen ho Christos. legei gar · ouk ēlthon plērōsai ton nomon alla katalysai.* But the citation should not be listed as Marcion's; it comes from the later Marcionite Marcus. On this last point, cf. von Harnack, "'Ich bin gekommen'," 16 n. 2; A. Hahn, *Das Evangelium Marcions* (Königsberg: Universitäts-Buchhandlung, 1823) 228-229; and E. Blackman, *Marcion and His Influence* (London: SPCK, 1948) 148-149. In view of all this, the argument of Benoit-Boismard is definitely weakened, if not destroyed. The citations from the Talmud, Clementine Homilies, Didascalia, Clement of Alexandria, Epiphanius, Tertullian, the Ebionite gospel, and the Egyptian gospel probably witness to later reformulations or deformations of Mt 5:17, rather than to an alternate tradition in Q or proto-Lk. — It is curious that, while Bultmann, *Geschichte,* 147, treats vss. 17-19 together as a section that Mt took from Q, he never states expressly whether or not he thinks that the verses existed in Q as a strict unit in the order in which we now have them. Moreover, Bultmann does not consider in detail the problem of Matthean redactional activity in vss. 17-19, although he does see vs. 20 as a purely Matthean creation. For further discussion and literature, see the *Ergänzungsheft* to Bultmann's *Geschichte*: the third edition (1958), p. 21, and the fourth edition (1971), p. 56. In the fourth edition, p. 56, G. Theissen (the editor) states that the common opinion today is that vss. 17-19 represent tradition of the Palestinian church, while vs. 20 is redactional. Hummel, Barth, and Strecker are mentioned among those who judge vss. 17 and 20 to be redactional brackets. Note that, as a consequence of Bultmann's view, even if Lk preserved Lk 16:17 in its more primitive Q-form (or at least in its basic simplicity), Mt preserved the logion's context in Q; so Bultmann. *Geschichte,* 147.

said of Q: it is eclectic. Granted the existence of 5:17-19 in Q, we can see that Mt on the whole is anything but eclectic; rather, he has carefully refashioned the Q-form of 5:17-19 to fit his particular theology.[191] This brings us to our second point.

2. *The Additions or Changes Mt Made*

We hold that Mt's redactional activity operates consistently according to set intentions, and cannot be accused of being eclectic or schizophrenic. The redactional intentions governing Mt's reworking of 5:17-19 are, in the main, (1) a parenetic interest in the leaders and Christians of his own community; (2) a theological interest in the fulfillment of prophecy and in the Christ-event as the terminus of the validity of the Law *qua* Mosaic; and (3) a polemic interest in the scribes and Pharisees. In short, his redactional interests are pastoral, theological (regarding the nexus of salvation-history, Christ, and the Law), and polemical. Let us see how these three interests motivate Mt's additions and changes.

In vs. 17 the *mē nomisēte*, if it is anything more than a stylistic flourish, indicates a pastoral concern that the audience be not led astray by a false understanding of the antitheses. The insertion of *ē tous prophētas* (and the change of the verb to *plērōsai*?) introduces Mt's theological interest in the fulfillment of prophecy. The OT can be properly understood only by close attention to both Law *and* prophets. This theological interest is continued and heightened in 5:18, where the most important additions are made. Mt 5:18a sets the tone of solemn apocalyptic prophecy. Mt 5:18d sets a *heilsgeschichtliche* terminus for the Law's yod and stroke: the coming to pass of all prophesied events (in the death-resurrection of Christ). The parenetic tone is dominant in 5:19, with the warning to the slack being matched with a promise to the faithful. And vs. 20, the totally Matthean creation, mixes polemic and parenetic concerns. Throughout the whole of 5:17-20, Mt is working with his double horizon, i.e., the level of the sacred past of Jesus and the level of his own church's life. Insofar as the first level is always present, the whole pericope is tailored to fit Mt's theology of salvation-history. Insofar as the second level is always present, the pericope is tailored to fit Mt's parenetic and polemic interests. By no stretch of the imagination can such careful editorial work be dismissed as eclectic.

3. *The Form-critical Categories of the Redacted Verses*

Most of the basic forms were present in Q, but Mt has rounded them off nicely. As the text now stands, we have the following succession of forms:

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[191] *Contra* Dupont, *Les Béatitudes* I, 131; and *contra* Descamps, "Essai d'interprétation," 172-173.

5:17 — programmatic-eschatological *ēlthon*-word of the "pure" form (with parenetic introduction)
5:18 — apocalyptic restriction (concerning the terminus of some element of the present age)
5:19 — double *Satz heiligen Rechtes*
5:20 — *Satz heiligen Rechtes* that is also an *Eingangsbedingung* (or *Einlassbedingung*)

We think that the first three forms were already present in Q. Mt may have rounded off 5:19 by balancing 19ab with 19cd. He then rounded off the whole pericope and formed the introduction to the antitheses by creating another *Satz* with the form of an *Einlassbedingung*.

4. *The Basic Line of Thought of the Pericope in Its Final Form*

Our summary up until now enables us to grasp the movement of thought in 5:17-20 as Mt understood it. After the beatitudes (5:3-12) and the metaphors of salt and light (5:13-16), there is a clear break. *Mt 5:17* begins a new theme: the Law and the prophets, the center of OT faith, in their relation to Jesus, the center of Christian faith. Jesus immediately warns against thinking that his activity concerning Law and prophets is purely negative or destructive (as a facile reading of the antitheses might indicate). No, he comes as the eschatological fulfiller. He gives this eschatological, prophetic fulfillment (which preserves yet transcends, even revokes) to both Law and prophets. Law is therefore to be understood in relation to, in analogy with, prophecy. *Mt 5:18* explains this relationship or analogy. With the solemnity of an apocalyptic prophet, Jesus assures his audience that, until the eschatological passing away of heaven and earth which signals the new age, not the slightest part of the Law will pass, until all prophesied events have come to pass. As Mt shows by his whole ordering of salvation-history, his arrangement of the public ministry of Jesus, and his depiction of the apocalyptic events at the death-resurrection, this passing away of heaven and earth which marks the fulfillment of all prophecy occurs at the death-resurrection, *die Wende der Zeit*. The death-resurrection of Jesus is the apocalyptic terminus prophesied in 5:18. *Mt 5:19* draws the conclusions from this thesis. On the level of the sacred past of Jesus' public ministry, 5:19 inculcates faithfulness to the Torah while the old aeon lasts. On the level of Mt's parenesis to the community, it inculcates the importance of fidelity on the part of the Christian teacher to all Jesus commanded (cf. Mt 28:20). *Mt 5:20* then sums up 5:17-19 and forms the immediate introduction to the antitheses. The theme of Law is subtly shifted and reinterpreted in terms of Christian justice. The eschatological mission of Jesus, the economy of salvation-history (and the Law's place within it),

the fidelity of the teacher, all aim at one practical goal: *dikaiosynē*, the moral life of the Christian. This *dikaiosynē* means perfect conformity to God's will, a moral life that far transcends the legalism, externalism, minimalism, lovelessness, and hypocrisy of the scribes and Pharisees. It is that abundant Christian justice, opposed to the justice of the scribes and Pharisees (yes, opposed at times — in its prophetic fullness — to the letter of the Torah!) which is now unfolded in 5:21-48. At the end of the antitheses, Mt places another summary explaining the essence of Christian morality (5:48: *teleios*) and then begins a new section on practical piety, with another title (6:1: *dikaiosynē*).

When we began this third chapter, we noted that many works on Mt's theology either skirt the issue of Law or judge Mt to be eclectic (if not worse). In this chapter, we certainly have not skirted the issue. Nor have we found Mt to be eclectic. Rather, we have come to appreciate Mt's consistent redactional theology, expressed in carefully editing the tradition he received. By this effort, he has succeeded in making an intelligible whole out of a compilation of logia on the Law. Seen in the light of Mt's total theology, the pericope of 5:17-20 is not eclectic, i.e., a literary unit containing statements completely out of joint with one another. Naturally, there are rough edges which remain in his text, even after his most painstaking efforts (e.g., the connection of 5:19 to 5:18).[192] For this reason, the connectives (*gar*, *oun*, and *de*) should not be pressed too far. They are explanatory particles which carry the thought onwards, without necessarily indicating a strict cause-and-effect relationship (the one exception here might be the *oun* of vs. 19a). But, on the whole, Mt has done a masterful job of welding together disparate Jewish-Christian material to create a unit that speaks his own mind, makes a rich and profound statement on the Law, addresses the pastoral needs of his church, and introduces the all-important antitheses. It is to these antitheses that we must now turn in Chapter Four, in order to obtain corroboration of our thesis.

[192] To speak of "the contradiction between vs. 19 and vs. 20," as Hamerton-Kelly does ("Attitudes," 26), exaggerates the unevenness of the flow of thought.

CHAPTER IV

The Antitheses — Confirmation of a Thesis

A. Introduction

After having laid the foundations of our thesis in Chapter I, having sketched the hermeneutical context of salvation-history (with stress on the death-resurrection) in Chapter II, and having interpreted the key text of 5:17-20 within this context in Chapter III, we now turn to the six antitheses (5:21-48) for corroboration of our thesis.

Obviously, we do not intend to give a full treatment of every exegetical question raised by the antitheses. The interpretation of the many layers of tradition and redaction in the antitheses would demand a separate monograph.[1] We come to this chapter with only one question among the many possible ones. We must try to keep this one question, this overall purpose before our eyes as we go through 5:21-48. The one question we address to the antitheses is this: Do the antitheses confirm or disprove the view of 5:17-20 and the theology of the Law we presented in Chapters II and III? This question can in turn be reduced to a more precise one: Do any of the antitheses revoke the letter of the Mosaic Law? For, if some antitheses do revoke the letter of the Law (i.e., some command, prohibition, permission, or institution expressly contained in the wording of the Torah), then the view that Mt simply portrays Jesus as the one who confirms, explains, fulfills, and radicalizes the Law is inadequate. It does not do justice to all the data, which include *programmatic* revocation as well as *programmatic* fidelity. A theology of the Law in Mt which can make room for annulling some prescriptions of the Law and which explains how such annulling can follow right upon 5:18 is to be preferred. For, at first glance, the great antithesis in ch. 5 of Mt seems to be between 5:18 (or the whole of 5:17-19) and the antitheses. Words which, at first hearing, might strike us as stringently Jewish-Christian are followed by six statements, three of which seem to revoke the Law. If it is true that some of the antitheses do annul the Law, then this has great repercussions on any attempt to interpret

[1] Unfortunately, the antitheses are rarely given the full attention they deserve. Usually they form a section or chapter in a book or monograph dedicated to some larger question (the Sermon on the Mount, theology of the Law in Mt, etc.).

5:18, and 5:17-19 as a unit. As we have seen, Mt has carefully edited 5:17-19 (especially 5:18!) and has purposely positioned this pericope within ch. 5 in order to make it the introduction to the antitheses. An interpretation of 5:17-19 which cannot satisfactorily explain this editorial activity of Mt, which cannot explain how 5:17-19 goes together with revocation of major Mosaic institutions, is inadmissible. It is our claim that our exegesis of 5:17-20, unlike many recent interpretations, gives a satisfactory explanation, not only of 5:17-20 taken by itself, but also of the flow of thought between 5:17-20 and the antitheses. In this chapter, then, we examine the antitheses not to decide individual points such as the meaning of *raka* and *mōre* in 5:22. Rather, to each antithesis we will put the basic question: Does it simply deepen and spiritualize the letter of the Law, or does the deepening and spiritualizing go so far that the letter is annulled? In the latter case, our explanation of 5:17-20 is confirmed, while at the same time an insurmountable difficulty is raised for most other interpretations of 5:17-20.

B. General Observations on the Antitheses

Before we begin examining the individual antitheses, we should make some observations about the antitheses in general.

1. *Matthean Composition*

As they stand today in Mt's text, the six antitheses (5:21-26, on murder; 5:27-30, on adultery; 5:31-32, on divorce; 5:33-37, on oaths; 5:38-42, on talion; 5:43-48, on love of neighbor) are the product of Matthean composition.[2] They come from various sources. Some probably stood in the antithetical form before Mt received them, others were probably given their antithetical form by Mt, in imitation of the antitheses he had received. Not only did Mt put the six antitheses together as a unit, he (or, in some cases, his tradition) also attached various allied sayings to all of the antitheses except the third (5:31-32; cf. 5:23-26, added to 5:21-22; 5:29-30, added to 5:27-28; 5:34b-37, added to 5:33-34a; 5:39b-42, added to 5:38-39a; and 5:45-48, added to 5:43-44).[3]

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[2] Cf. Grundmann, *Das Evangelium nach Matthäus*, 151.

[3] However, some of these "clusters" were probably formed before Mt redacted the tradition; compare the fourth antithesis with Jas 5:12. Lk 6:27-36 may reflect a large "cluster" in Q, which Mt skillfully edited and rearranged to produce the fifth and sixth antitheses. F. Filson, "Broken Patterns in the Gospel of Matthew," *JBL* 75 (1956) 227-231, thinks that the broken patterns in 5:21-48 show that Mt was more interested in topical order than numerical structures. The attempt of J. Kürzinger, "Zur Komposition der Bergpredigt," *Bib* 40 (1959) 569-589, to delineate the structures of the antitheses (cf. pp. 572-574) is not very successful. More unlikely still are the strophic patterns of D. Müller, *Die Bergpredigt im Lichte der Strophentheorie* (Wien: Hölder, 1908); for him, a line can range from three to fourteen words.

2. *Material Supposedly Found in Q*

Three of the antitheses (Nos. 3, 5, 6: divorce, talion, love of neighbor) are usually grouped together because Mt supposedly took them from Q.[4] Because of the form of the Q-parallels in Lk, it is often said that these three antitheses did not have an antithetical form in the pre-Matthean tradition. While this is quite possible, caution is called for, at least in the case of Nos. 6 and 5 (love of neighbor and talion). Lk 6:27a reads *alla hymin legō tois akouousin* (=Mt 5:44a *egō de legō hymin*).[5] It is not impossible that Lk preserves the remnants of what was an antithesis in the Q-tradition. In the case of No. 5 (talion), the words which constitute the antithesis proper (5:38-39a) do not appear in Lk; and the change from the second person plural to the second person singular in vs. 39b may indicate that the antithesis proper and the subsequent material came from different sources. Only of the subsequent material can a Q-origin be affirmed with fair certitude. Moreover, we should be careful to distinguish form from content when we speak of a logion's antithetical character. As we can see in the *Streitgespräch* on divorce (Mk 10:2-12 = Mt 19:3-9), the prohibition of divorce is unavoidably antithetical to the Mosaic Law, at least as far as content is concerned. And the content is not without its impact on the form (Mk 10:4-5: *Mōysēs ... egrapsen,* vs. 11: *kai legei autois*; the antithetical tone is sharpened in Mt 19:8-9: *Mōysēs epetrepsen ... legō de hymin*).

3. *Material Proper to Mt*

The other three antitheses (Nos. 1, 2, 4: murder, adultery, oaths) are certainly proper to Mt (as we have seen, the fifth antithesis proper

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With such latitude, patterns can be found in any material. The attempt of J. Doeve to structure the antitheses according to the order of Ex 20-21 and Lev 18-19 is also unsuccessful; cf. his *Jewish Hermeneutics in the Synoptic Gospels and Acts* (Assen: van Gorcum, 1954) 191-200.

[4] We begin our division of the antitheses by presenting here the traditional bipartite grouping, which has become popular especially since Bultmann's *Geschichte,* 143-144. This grouping has since been followed by many other authors. But Joachim Jeremias, *New Testament Theology* I, 251-253, gives an incisive critique of Bultmann's reasoning. Bultmann is not exact on literary sources (the core of the fifth antithesis is *not* in Lk), on the question of which antitheses revoke the Torah (actually, the fourth does, the sixth does not), and on the question of the negative form of the OT citation (which only Nos. 1 and 2 have *simpliciter*). Divisions on the basis of sources and abrogation of Torah (if not on the basis of form) are certainly valid, but the divisions of Bultmann are incorrect. Not everything Jeremias says in his critique is of equal validity; we have incorporated the more important points into our survey.

[5] On this point, even so recent a writer as Sand tends simply to repeat the "Bultmannian line" without critique. Speaking of the three antitheses which (supposedly) have parallels in Lk, he says (*Gesetz,* 48): "Wichtig ist zu sehen, dass in Q diese Sprüche noch keinen antithetischen Charakter besassen...." What of the *alla hymin legō tois akouousin* of Lk 6:27a? Such a phrase is not a full-blown Matthean antithesis, but one cannot say that it possesses "noch keinen antithetischen Charakter." How do we know that Lk did not break up what was a full antithesis in Q?

might possibly be listed here as well). Antitheses Nos. 1, 2, 4 are generally considered to have been received by Mt in antithetical form. The traditional reasoning here is that these statements after the *legō de hymīn* are much more intelligible in an antithetical framework, and that these three traditional antitheses gave Mt the needed impulse to cast Nos. 3, 5, 6 (divorce, talion, love of neighbor) in similar antithetical form. This may be true, but doubts must still linger about the primitive form of Nos. 5 and 6. Jeremias even goes so far as to suggest that all the antitheses in 5:21-48 had an antithetical form in the tradition. But, to prove this, he must suppose that the divorce-logion was handed down both with and without the antithetical formula.[6] Fortunately for us, this question of the originality of the antithetical formula does not touch our main question.

4. *Variety of Content*

The antitheses are heterogenous not only in origin but also in content. All the antitheses now have a legal tone to them because of their common structure. But, while some of the material in the antitheses is indeed taken from church law, other elements belong to general parenesis. For example, the prohibition of divorce was understood by the early church to be a practical (and practicable) rule governing church discipline (Mk 10:2-12; Lk 16:18; 1 Cor 7:10-16; the so-called "exceptive clauses" in Mt confirm that the church applied the rule to concrete cases). On the other hand, the command to love one's enemies (Mt 5:44) hardly allowed for strict disciplinary enforcement. Communitarian discipline is thus reflected in some, but not all, of the antitheses.[7] One must

[6] Joachim Jeremias, *New Testament Theology* I, 252; this is perhaps the weakest point in Jeremias' position. At least in the third antithesis, Mt probably put the tradition into antithetical form. And we must hold open the possibility that he did the same in the sixth antithesis (and perhaps even in the fifth). — Wrege, a disciple of Jeremias, holds that the antitheses could be neither created nor expanded by Mt (*Überlieferungsgeschichte,* 45). But his view rests on a rejection of Q and on a conception of the RZ and Mt's "fulfillment Christology" that leaves no place for abrogation of parts of the Law (cf. pp. 2-3, 56).

[7] This should be remembered especially by moral theologians when they come to treat the antitheses. The fact that the sixth antithesis cannot be enforced by church sanctions does not prove that the third antithesis should not be a part of church discipline. The third antithesis *was* church discipline in NT times; the sixth was not. One must respect the different *Sitze im Leben* involved here. We see, then, that no *a priori* principle of interpretation can be applied to all the antitheses: e.g., the presupposition that all the antitheses follow a "not only-but also" structure of thought, or that what is commanded is only an ideal, not a rule enforced by church discipline. We see that, for example, the first antithesis does follow a "not only-but also" pattern; the prohibition of murder is certainly not rescinded, but broadened. And the prohibition of (at least internal) anger is hardly enforceable by community discipline. On the other hand, the third antithesis does not follow the "not only-but also" pattern, and the rule on divorce was enforced as church discipline (as 1 Cor 7 and the exceptive clause in Mt show). When we come to the fourth and fifth antitheses, we cannot invoke any *a priori* principle to decide whether

therefore beware of making general statements about the antitheses that are meant to apply to all six equally. Commentators take for granted too readily that a common form and structure guarantee common content and ideas.[8]

5. *Structural Elements*

Despite their heterogeneous nature, Mt managed to weld these traditional elements into a unit of six antitheses. His chief tool was the introductory formula, repeated at the beginning of each subdivision.[9] The precise wording and length of the formula differ from antithesis to antithesis: *ēkousate hoti errethē tois archaiois* (full formula in 5:21, 33); *ēkousate hoti errethē* (medium formula in 5:27, 38, 43); and *errethē de* (short formula only in 5:31). Mt's intention in distributing these formulas seems more artistic than ideological: full formula (Nos. 1, 4 with resumptive *palin*), followed by medium formula (Nos. 2, 5), followed by short formula (No. 3). However, the pattern is broken in the final antithesis. The reason for this is not clear. It is possible that Mt felt that No. 6, being both the final and the second longest antithesis (in a sort of inclusion, it comes closest to No. 1 in length), deserved a longer introduction than the laconic *errethē de* (quite suited to the shortest antithesis, No. 3). But, at the very least, the variation in the introductory formula seems to carry no great theological significance. No. 2 has a shorter formula than No. 1, yet both start with a command from the decalogue and both merely broaden and interiorize the command, without rescinding it.

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or not they rescind any Mosaic command or institution, or whether Mt's church enforced them literally. Only an examination of each case will decide that. But the fact that Mt has the emphatic *holōs* in 5:34 as opposed to the tradition in Jas 5:12, and the fact that the Corinthians were also expected to refrain from law-suits (1 Cor 6:1-8), do argue in favor of the fourth and fifth antitheses being practical rules of life in Mt's church.

[8] This is a point well made by R. Tannehill, "The 'Focal Instance' as a Form of New Testament Speech: a Study of Matthew 5:39b-42," *JR* 50 (1970) 372-385. He stresses that the antitheses include very heterogeneous material — from private matters like adultery in the heart to public, social questions like divorce. We should be careful, then, about making blanket statements covering all the antitheses.

[9] This studied repetition forbids us to unite the third antithesis with the second and so count only five antitheses. One cannot appeal to the very short introductory formula in 5:31 (simply *errethē*), since this probably fits into the overall structure of the six formulas. And, granted six distinct antitheses, it becomes extremely difficult to affirm — as is often done — that the order of the antitheses follows the order of the commandments in the second table of the decalogue. When this order is affirmed, e.g., by G. Schmahl, "Die Antithesen der Bergpredigt," *TTZ* 83 (1974) 284-297, especially 286, he has to admit immediately that the fourth and seventh commandments are passed over. Actually, only antitheses No. 1 and No. 2 follow the supposed order; Nos. 5 and 6 do not fit, and even No. 4 is concerned with the broad field of all vows and oaths, and not just the question of false witness (thus, the second as well as the eighth commandment might be involved).

And so, even in the area of structure and form, the antitheses are not completely homogeneous. The length varies greatly (compare the 135 words of No. 1 with the 33 words of No. 3), and the forms of the various subunits in each antithesis have not been standardized by Mt. A good example is provided by No. 1, the longest of the antitheses. We have the negative apodictic command of the decalogue (5:21a) followed by a casuistic statement (5:21b: *hos d'an ... enochos*). Vs. 22 takes up this casuistic form three times; but, while 5:22a uses the participial form (*pas ho orgizomenos*), 5:22b+c revert to the conditional relative clause of 5:21b (*hos d'an*). Vss. 23-24 constitute a parable-like story, beginning with *ean oun* and carried on by a number of imperatives (*aphes, hypage, diallagēthi, prosphere*). The imperative is taken up by the new parable beginning in vs. 25 (*isthi*), which ends in a number of negative purpose clauses. The entire unit is closed with an *Amēn*-word of "apocalyptic restriction" (*amēn legō soi, ou mē exelthēis ... heōs an* etc.). Various substructures can be found in all the antitheses except the terse No. 3. Again, we are put on our guard against blanket statements.

To complete his structure, Mt places 5:48 at the end of the antitheses. Vs. 48 has a triple function. First, and most obviously, it concludes the sixth antithesis, on love of enemies (though, for this purpose, the Q-form of *oiktirmones* in Lk 6:36 would have been better suited).[10] Secondly, Mt uses *teleios* to round off the six antitheses and hark back to *dikaiosynē* in 5:20. The explanation of Christian justice, needed for entering the Kingdom,[11] is completed; it can be summed up as being perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect.[12] Thirdly, 5:48 summarizes well the entire theme of the first part of the Sermon on the Mount,

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[10] For the position that Lk reflects the Q-form of the adjective, cf. Dupont, "'Soyez parfaits' (Mt V, 48) 'Soyez miséricordieux' (Lc VI, 36)," *Sac Pag* (eds. J. Coppens *et al.*; Gembloux: Duculot, 1959) II, 150-163; also his *Les Béatitudes* I, 153 n. 2, and 154. Mt 19:21, which refers *teleios* to selling all and following Jesus (and *not* to loving one's neighbor in vs. 19), does not support the idea that the theme of love of neighbor has moved Mt to insert *teleios* at 5:48. — Note that in all four gospels *teleios* occurs only three times: twice in Mt 5:48, and once in Mt 19:21.

[11] We stress that *teleios* refers to the justice required of every Christian, not just of some special group. Unless we are willing to grant a two-stage morality in Mt 19:16-22, the *ei theleis teleios einai* of vs. 21 equals the *ei de theleis eis tēn zōēn eiselthein* of vs. 17 (cf. 5:20: *eiselthēte eis tēn basileian tōn ouranōn*).

[12] Cf. Lev 19:2: "Ye shall be holy for I, Yahweh your God, am holy"; cf. also Lev 11:44; 20:7, 26; Dt 18:13. But, while holiness (like mercy) is properly predicated of God and only in a participatory fashion of men, *teleios* in the LXX is regularly used of man, not of God. Dupont, "'Soyez parfaits'," 160-161, is quite right when he says that we have here an indication that Mt read *oiktirmones* in Q, but changed it for his own moral and catechetical purposes, even though it strained the idea of imitation of God by man. Mt's use of *teleios* is more conditioned by the position of 5:48 within Mt 5 than it is by the content of 5:48 in itself. On 5:48 as the "goal" of all the antitheses, cf. Hasler, "Das Herzstück der Bergpredigt. Zum Verständnis der Antithesen in Matth. 5.21-48," *TZ* 15 (1959) 90-106. For more literature on 5:48, cf. n. 31 of this chapter.

resuming the key ideas expressed in *ptōchoi tōi pneumati* (5:3), *katharoi tēi kardiai* (5:8), and *perisseusēi hymōn hē dikaiosynē* (5:20; cf. the *perisson* of 5:47). Behind the LXX use of *teleios* stands such Hebrew words as *tāmîm* and *šālēm*, with the idea of whole-hearted, sincere, honest, undivided devotion to Yahweh.[13]

6. *The Basic Antithetical Formula*

We have stated under (5) that the variation in the introductory formula is probably more esthetic than substantive. Therefore, no matter what the length of the formula might be in a given antithesis, its meaning must be judged from the full form: *ēkousate hoti errethē tois archaiois ... egō de legō hymin hoti* (5:21-22; 5:33-34). What is the precise meaning of each word?

The second person plural of *ēkousate* refers primarily to the disciples (5:1: *hoi mathētai autou*, followed by the second person plural in 5:11, 12, 13, 14, 16, 17, 18, 20). But it also refers indirectly to the crowds (5:1: *tous ochlous*, not mentioned again until the end of the Sermon, 7:28).[14] The hearing could refer to the hearing of the Scriptures as read in the synagogue, and also to the explanations of Jewish teachers that surrounded the words of Scripture.[15] When we take a look at each of the antitheses, we find that what is first cited is always a passage (or passages) from the Torah (the canon within the canon).[16] So the written words of the Torah, heard by the assembly on the Sabbath, are certainly included in the antitheses.

This is confirmed by the divine passive *errethē*: You have heard the words originally spoken by God on Sinai. To try to make *errethē* refer only to the teaching of the scribes is forced, for three reasons. (1) It creates a tautology with *ēkousate*: "you have heard [=learned] as traditional scribal teaching what was said [=taught] as traditional scribal teaching..." (2) It ignores the fact that what is cited each

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[13] Cf. Delling, "teleios," *TDNT* VIII, 73-74. Again, we are given a healthy reminder that not everything in the Sermon on the Mount or in ch. 5 can be subsumed under love of neighbor (or enemies) — although *teleios* certainly does not exclude devotion to one's neighbor as well as to God. God's undivided mercy towards all men (vs. 45) is the precise model for the disciples' imitation.

[14] A curious feature of the treatment of the antitheses in Bornhäuser, *Bergpredigt*, 64, is that the second person plural is referred only to the Apostles, with regard to their conduct among themselves.

[15] Cf. M. Black, *An Aramaic Approach to the Gospels and Acts*[3] (Oxford: University Press, 1967) 300.

[16] The last part of vs. 43, an apparent exception, will be treated below. It is not quite accurate to say that the last part of 5:21 is not found in the Pentateuch. It is rather a summary statement of a large number of laws in the Torah. For example, it states precisely what is stated in Ex 21:12 and Lev 24:17, but simply in other words. As for 5:33, it simply meshes and summarizes a number of demands of the Torah. These verses should not be labeled "halakic interpretation"; they are demands of the Torah itself.

time (with the exception of the last part of vs. 43) is a passage (or paraphrase) from the written Torah, not an example of scribal *halākâ*. (3) Most important of all, this interpretation of *errethē* is flatly contradicted by Matthean usage. Outside of the antitheses, Mt's only use of the aorist passive form of *eirō* is in the participial form *to rēthen*, always predicated of God speaking in Scripture (not in oral tradition!). Usually the Lord is presented as speaking through a prophet (e.g., 1:22 and the other RZ).[17] But in Mt 22:31, Mt changes Mk's introduction to the citation of Ex 3:6 (Mk 12:26: *pōs eipen autōi ho theos legōn*) to read *to rēthen hymin hypo tou theou legontos*. Without a single exception, Mt always uses the passive aorist of *eirō* for the words of God as recorded in Scripture. By contrast, Mt does use the active forms of *legō* for scribal teaching, either of a "dogmatic" or of a "moral" (halakic) nature (e.g., 17:10: *hoi grammateis legousin*, on the coming of Elijah; 23:3: *eipōsin ... legousin*, of halakic rulings).

With this understanding of *ēkousate* and *errethē*, the meaning of *tois archaiois* becomes fairly clear. The phrase must refer at least to the Israelite generation at Sinai (or its leaders), although the word *archaiois* can certainly include as well the chain of teachers of the tradition which the scribes traced down to their own time.[18] In an attempt to restrict the whole sentence to scribal tradition (therefore with no direct reference to speaking on Sinai), *archaiois* is sometimes understood as a dative of agency, reflecting a semitic substratum with the *l*^{e} of

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[17] Cf. the fine observations of Miegge, *Il sermone sul monte*, 101-104. Matthean usage does not favor the idea that the principal agent to be understood with *errethē* is Moses or any human speaker. Notice, for example, the careful distinction in Mt 2:15: *hina plērōthēi to rēthen hypo Kyriou dia tou prophētou legontos* (cf. also Mt 22:31). Moreover, the commandments of the decalogue (cf. the first and second antitheses) were certainly understood to have been spoken directly by God. The same is true of the formulations taken from Lev.

[18] Cf. *Pirke Aboth* I, 1: "Moses received Torah from Sinai and delivered it to Joshua, and Joshua to the Elders, and the Elders to the Prophets, and the Prophets delivered it to the men of the Great Synagogue. They said three things: Be deliberate in judgment; and raise up many disciples; and make a fence for the Torah" (translation by R. Herford in *The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament in English* [ed. R. Charles; Oxford: Clarendon, 1913] II, 691). This broad understanding of *archaioi* (both Sinai generation and subsequent generations) is affirmed by Lohse, "'Ich aber sage euch,'" in *Der Ruf Jesu*, 198 n. 34; similarly, Berger, *Gesetzesauslegung*, 212 n. 3. E. Percy, *Die Botschaft Jesu* (Lund: Gleerup, 1953) 123-124, wishes to restrict the reference to the Sinai generation, on the basis of the aorist *errethē*; but this may be forcing too much out of the tense. McConnell, *Law and Prophecy*, 43, follows Percy; similarly, A. Argyle, *The Gospel According to St. Matthew* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1964) 50. Sand, *Gesetz*, 48, misses the point of *errethē* when he writes: "Andererseits berühren die Antithesen die halachische Interpretation der Tora; nicht nur das, 'was geschrieben ist' (*gegraptai*), sondern auch das, was in der halachischen Deutung 'gesagt ist' (*errethē*), wird in den Antithesen diskutiert." Strange to say, after giving this interpretation of *errethē*, Sand goes on to say on p. 52 that *archaiois* refers to the Sinai generation. Bornhäuser, *Bergpredigt*, 62, argues from *errethē* to a reference to the oral Law alone.

agency.[19] NT usage in general, Matthean usage in particular, and even classical Greek usage exclude this solution.[20]

From this we see that the meaning of the whole phrase is: "you have heard (in the synagogue or from scribal teaching in general) that God said to the ancients at Sinai (and to the teachers who passed down the tradition) that...." The traditional scribal interpretation which explained and sometimes distorted the written Torah is certainly included (cf. 5:20: *tōn grammateōn kai pharisaiōn*), but it is not the primary object of attention in the antithetical formula. The phrase aims first of all at what God said at Sinai, as it is recorded in the written Torah (cf. the words which are then cited).

With this understanding of 5:21a, we can appreciate the full force of 5:22a, *egō de legō hymin*: "God said to the ancients at Sinai ... but *I say* to you." The proper correlative of *egō legō* is not *ēkousate* (which is omitted in the third antithesis) but *errethē*, another form of a verb of saying. It is the two "sayings," one (by God) in the past and one (by Jesus) in the present, which are being contrasted, not hearing and saying.[21] We can now fully grasp the tremendous Christological import

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[19] So C. Jaeger, "A propos de deux passages du Sermon sur la montagne," *RHPR* 18 (1938) 415-418. Percy, *Botschaft*, 123 n. 2 (continued on 124) mentions the view of Jaeger; but Percy himself rejects his interpretation. Schweizer, *Das Evangelium nach Matthäus*, 71, considers the possibility of the translation, "it was said by the ancients." But he rejects it on the grounds that "it was said" always introduces in the NT a statement made by God, almost always in a citation of Scripture; similarly, G. Kittel, "legō," *TDNT* IV, 110 n. 173, and 111; Grundmann, *Das Evangelium nach Matthäus*, 154; Lohmeyer, *Das Evangelium des Matthäus*, 117.

[20] As noted by Blass-Debrunner (No. 191), the dative of agency is represented by only one genuine example in the NT, and this with the perfect passive (Lk 23:15); and even here the reading is not absolutely certain. Zerwick, *Graecitas Biblica* (No. 59) suggests tentatively that Jas 3:7 might be another example. But such cases as Mt 1:18 and 13:52 are not true datives of agency, and Mt has no example of a dative of agency with a verb of saying. Even in classical Greek, the dative of agency was regularly used only with the perfect and pluperfect passive, rarely with other passive tenses; cf. W. Goodwin-C. Gulick, *Greek Grammar* (N.Y.: Ginn, 1958) 247 (No. 1174a). It is interesting to note that none of the examples which Goodwin-Gulick cite has a simple verb of saying. The use of a dative of agency with a verb of saying would have given rise to inevitable confusion with the ordinary indirect object.

[21] This point is missed by Grundmann, *Das Evangelium nach Matthäus*, 155; a better interpretation is found in Lohmeyer, *Das Evangelium des Matthäus*, 117-118. This contrast between the two "sayings" is an important objection against equating the formula of the antitheses with the rabbinic formula, "I might hear [= understand literally], but you must say [= interpret correctly according to the sense]." One of the great proponents of comparing the two formulas is D. Daube, " 'Ye Have Heard — But I Say unto You,' " in *The New Testament and Rabbinic Judaism* (London: Athlone Press, 1956) 55-62 (a position adopted by Davies, *The Sermon*, 101, especially n. 1). But Daube himself admits that Mt has changed the formula (the "I-you" order is inverted to "you-I"). More importantly, in the antitheses, "the tone is not academic but final, prophetic, maybe somewhat defiant. Nor is there any reasoning... the setting in life of the Rabbinic form is dialectic exposition of the Law; that of the Matthean is proclamation of the true Law" (pp. 57-59). On pp. 61-62, Daube has to admit that the rabbinic formula can be traced only to the first half of the second century A.D., although Daube claims it is older. In the light of all this, Daube's

of this bold statement. The word of Jesus stands at times in contrast to the Word of God as expressed in the Torah; and, when this takes place, the word of Jesus is to be the decisive norm for the disciples' life.[22] But what is the nature of this contrast? The contrast could be understood in a mild sense: Jesus sharpens, radicalizes, internalizes

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claim that the gulf between the rabbinic and Matthean formulas is not too great seems unconvincing. He tries to show that the relationship between the two members in the antitheses is not one of pure contrast; rather, we are dealing with a wider interpretation which includes the old rule. As we shall see below, this holds true only for Nos. 1, 2, and 6, not for Nos. 3, 4, and 5. Part of Daube's difficulty stems from his presuppositions: Mt is a rabbinic gospel, revocation of Torah in the antitheses would contradict what is said in 5:17-20, and *plēroun* equals the Hebrew *qiyyēm* (highly unlikely in the face of LXX usage; see our remarks on *plēroō* in Chapter III, Section B, Part One). Another problem in Daube's argumentation is that he illustrates his thesis with *only* antitheses No. 1 and No. 6, which, admittedly, do not revoke the Law. Daube should have tested his thesis with a thorough exegesis of all the antitheses. — Joachim Jeremias, *New Testament Theology* I, 251, denies that the antithetical pattern in Mt 5 has any parallel in either Jewish or early Christian literature; from this he deduces that the pattern goes back to Jesus. McConnell, *Law and Prophecy,* 42 n. 121, rightly criticizes Daube for minimizing the great gulf between the rabbinic and Matthean formulas. — Cf. also M. Smith, *Tannaitic Parallels to the Gospels* (Philadelphia: Society of Biblical Literature, 1951) especially 27-29, where Smith claims that what Jesus does in the antitheses does not go beyond what the rabbis did. But Smith's examples usually are cases where one rabbi opposed other rabbis, or where rabbis used casuistic subterfuges to circumvent a law, not to abrogate a law in principle and on their own authority. Suggs, *Wisdom, Christology, and Law,* 111-113, gives a good refutation of the positions of Daube and Smith. Lohse, "'Ich aber sage euch,'" 192-193, lists W. Bacher, I. Abrahams, and B. Branscomb among those who use the rabbinic formula to explain Jesus' antitheses. Lohse himself points out that the *ēkousate* of the antitheses does not correspond exactly to the rabbinic "I may hear." The latter formula is used in midrashic discussions to introduce a misunderstanding of a text because of an overliteral exegesis; *ēkousate* introduces a citation from the Torah. (We might add: "thou shalt not kill" may have been understood too narrowly [i.e., without realizing that anger was just as bad], but hardly too literally [i.e., as though the prohibition were only metaphorical].) Lohse concludes that the two-part rabbinic formula is fundamentally different from the formula of the antitheses. On pp. 196-197, Lohse goes on to note that the formula "But I say" does occur among Tannaites who oppose the majority view in legal questions. He is willing to admit that this formula is comparable to Jesus' *egō de legō hymin,* since Jesus is giving a view opposed to the usual view, and since (Lohse claims) there are many rabbinic parallels to antitheses Nos. 1, 2, and 4 (though this is not actually true of No. 4!). Lohse then compares Jesus' radicalizing with that of the Qumranites, who never opposed their radicalized Law to the divine command. Rather, the Qumranites believed that they alone had grasped the Law's original meaning as given to and understood by the "ancients" (*r°šwnjm* = *archaioi*!). Neither the rabbis nor Qumranites would explicitly oppose their understanding of the Law to that of the ancients (p. 198). In the antitheses, Jesus neither bases his opinion on a particular exegesis of Scripture nor opposes his opinion to some other famous scholar. — Berger, *Die Gesetzesauslegung Jesu,* 589, misses the point of the contrast between *errethē* and *legō* when he says that Jesus is being directly opposed to Moses as the new revealer. E. Cothenet, "Prophétisme dans le Nouveau Testament," in *Dictionnaire de la Bible, Supplément* (eds. H. Cazelles - A. Feuillet; Paris: Letouzey et Ané, 1972) VIII, 1268, is closer to, but has not fully grasped, the truth when he writes: "Le Christ nous apparaît ainsi comme un super-Moïse."

[22] Schweizer, *Das Evangelium nach Matthäus,* 17, sees this very clearly, and is willing to attribute this tremendous claim to the historical Jesus.

the Torah, going beyond the letter to the ultimate intention of the Torah, thus breaking through scribal casuistry and minimalism, though not revoking the stipulations of the Torah themselves. Or the contrast could be understood to involve abrogation: Jesus radicalizes the Law to such an extent that he actually revokes important laws, permissions, or institutions sanctioned by the Torah. Either interpretation is *a priori* possible; only an inspection of the antitheses will tell us which is verified in the individual case. As we have already stated, we contend that both kinds of contrast (mere radicalizing *and* annulling) are verified in different antitheses. Antitheses Nos. 1, 2, 6 (murder, adultery, love of neighbor) simply radicalize the Torah, but do not revoke its letter. Antitheses Nos. 3, 4, 5 (divorce, oaths, talion) not only radicalize but also revoke the letter of the Torah. We will devote the rest of this chapter to an effort to substantiate this claim.

C. The Antitheses Which Do Not Revoke the Letter of the Law

As we have observed already, our view of which antitheses revoke the letter of the Torah does not agree with that of Bultmann in his *Geschichte der synoptischen Tradition.*[23] Unfortunately, Bultmann's division of the antitheses has been taken over uncritically by many subsequent authors.[24] But some recent writers have noticed the inadequacy

[23] Bultmann, *Geschichte,* 142-144; cf. n. 4 of this chapter.

[24] E.g., Bornkamm, "Enderwartung und Kirche," 22-23; Eichholz, *Auslegung der Bergpredigt,* 70-71; Schulz, *Stunde,* 187 (very strong on the element of revocation); Hummel, *Auseinandersetzung,* 72-73 (with a doubt about whether No. 3 really revokes the Law); ultimately, Hummel thinks only No. 5 is a total annulment. Braun, *Radikalismus* II, 97 n. 1, also follows Bultmann; so, too, Sand, *Gesetz,* 53; Rothfuchs, "Die sogenannten Antithesen des Matthäusevangeliums und ihr Gesetzesverständnis — untersucht im Zusammenhang Mt 5,17-48," *Lutherischer Rundblick* 16 (1968) 95-109, especially 101. Hummel is typical of many who try to explain Matthean annulment by distinguishing between the misunderstood Torah, which is not identical with God's will, and the Torah as rightly explained by Jesus (cf. *Auseinandersetzung,* 50). But this double-Torah concept is simply not to be found in Mt's use of *nomos.* The real opposition in Mt is rather expressed by the antithetical formula of 5:21-22. Carlston, "The Things That Defile," 80 n. 6 (continued on 81), rightly criticizes Hummel for trying to distinguish two Torahs, but then Carlston falls back upon Bultmann's division as to which antitheses set aside the Torah. Suggs, *Wisdom, Christology, and Law,* 106 and 114, tries to solve the opposition by saying that, for Mt, Jesus cannot contradict the Torah because Jesus *is* the Torah. This may in some sense be true, but it still does not give a complete solution to the problem of revocation of the written Torah (the only meaning of *nomos* in Mt!). — M. Albertz, *Die Botschaft des Neuen Testamentes* (Zurich: Evangelischer Verlag, I/1, 1947; II/1, 1954), seems inconsistent. In I/1, 62, he holds that antitheses Nos. 1, 2, and 4 sharpen the Law, while No. 3 (and apparently Nos. 5 and 6) rescind the letter of the Torah. But in II/1, 268, he seems to deny any abrogation. Schweizer, *Das Evangelium nach Matthäus,* 66, has his own view: antitheses Nos. 1 and 2 intensify Torah, Nos. 3, 5, and 6 annul Torah, and No. 4 has a middle position (no direct opposition to Torah, but abolition of popular practice, perhaps even of one of the Ten Commandments). — H. Merkel, "Jesus und die Pharisäer," *NTS* 14 (1967-68) 194-208, holds (on p. 199) that no antithesis revokes the Torah; he misunderstands antitheses Nos. 3 and 5. Also

of Bultmann's position and have offered various corrections.[25] It is in the light of these corrections that we make the following observations.

Almost all the critics agree that antitheses Nos. 1 and 2 (murder and adultery) radicalize and internalize the Law without revoking it. The case is so clear that there is no need to belabor the point.[26] In the first antithesis,[27] Jesus obviously does not revoke the letter of the

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against any revocation are Hoffmann, "Die Auslegung der Bergpredigt," *BLeb* 10 (1969) 264-275, especially 275; Hill, *The Gospel of Matthew*, 120 (depending on Daube); Blair, *Jesus in the Gospel of Matthew*, 114; and apparently Dupont, *Les Béatitudes* I, 156-158.

[25] Notably, Joachim Jeremias, *New Testament Theology* I, 251-255, especially 252. McConnell, *Law and Prophecy*, 49, 51, also holds that antitheses Nos. 3, 4, and 5 annul OT laws. But his explanation of the meaning of this within Mt's redactional understanding is weak. For example, on p. 17 he tries to explain the situation by distinguishing between deliberately annulling the Law and setting aside the Law; Jesus does not do the first but he does do the second. McConnell does give a good critique of the attempt to find rabbinic parallels for the antitheses. He reminds us (p. 55) that: (1) the rabbinic parallels are gathered from a vast literature covering a great amount of time, and so do not parallel the one compact, highly graphic and forceful group called the antitheses; (2) often the rabbinic sayings which do parallel some of the antitheses are scattered among blocks of material dealing with ritualism and ceremonialism; (3) the majority of these rabbinic parallels belong to the second and third centuries and may not represent the rabbinic attitude at the time of Jesus. Hamerton-Kelly, "Attitudes," 22, especially n. 11, holds the unusual view that only antitheses Nos. 1 and 2 intensify the Torah, while all the rest revoke it. To Jeremias' objection about No. 6, Hamerton-Kelly responds in a puzzling manner: "...whether attested in the OT or not, vss. 43-48 understand the phrase about hating enemies to be a command, which Jesus explicitly refutes." But the whole point is: Is it a command *of the Torah*? Massaux, "Les relations," 273-279, comes close to Hamerton-Kelly's position.

[26] Strack-Billerbeck, *Kommentar* I, 275-290, and 294-303, give numerous parallels to the teaching of the first and second antitheses.

[27] A selected bibliography on the first antithesis would include (listed alphabetically by author): J. Behm, "eunoeō," *TDNT* IV, 971-973; *idem*, "thysiastērion," *TDNT* III, 182; K. Berger, *Die Gesetzesauslegung Jesu* I, 303-304, 499; G. Bertram, "mōros," *TDNT* IV, 840-842; K. Bornhäuser, *Die Bergpredigt*, 68-70; H. Braun, *Radikalismus* II, 25 n. 9, 82 n. 2; F. Büchsel, "krisis," *TDNT* III, 941; *idem*, "eikē," *TDNT* II, 380; *idem*, "dōron," *TDNT* II, 166; *idem*, "diallassō," *TDNT* I, 253-254; *idem*, "kritēs," *TDNT* III, 942; *idem*, "apodidōmi," *TDNT* II, 167-168; F. Bussby, "A Note on raka (Matthew v. 22) and battologeō (Matthew vi.7) in the Light of Qumran," *ExpT* 76 (1964-65) 26; G. Delling, "hypagō," *TDNT* VIII, 504; J. Dupont, *Les Béatitudes* I, 103-106, 147-149; G. Eichholz, *Auslegung*, 72-77; F. Filson, "Broken Patterns," 228-229; A. Fridrichsen, "Exegetisches zum Neuen Testament. Matth. 5,21-22," *Symbolae Osloenses* 13 (1934) 38-40; K. Fullerton, "Raka," *ExpT* 15 (1903-04) 429-431; P. Gaechter, *Das Matthäus Evangelium*, 170-176; P. Gloag, "Our Lord's View of the Sixth Commandment," *ExpT* 4 (1892-93) 492-496; W. Grundmann, *Das Evangelium nach Matthäus*, 152-158; R. Guelich, "Mt 5:22: Its Meaning and Integrity," *ZNW* 64 (1973) 39-52; H. Hanse, "enochos," *TDNT* II, 828; V. Hasler, "Das Herzstück," 91-93; *idem*, *Amen*, 57, 79; D. Hill, *The Gospel of Matthew*, 122; P. Hoffmann, "Auslegung der Bergpredigt," 182; Joachim Jeremias, "geenna," *TDNT* I, 657-658; *idem*, "raka," *TDNT* VI, 973-976; *idem*, *New Testament Theology* I, 148-149; *idem*, "Lass allda deine Gabe (Mt 5:23f.)," in *Abba*, 103-107; G. Kittel, "eschatos," *TDNT* II, 697; K. Köhler, "Zu Mt 5,22," *ZNW* 19 (1919-20) 91-95; J. Kürzinger, "Zur Komposition der Bergpredigt," 577-578; F. Lang, "pyr," *TDNT* VI, 945; R. Lenski, *The Interpretation of St. Matthew's Gospel*, 216-223; H. Liese, "De justitia evangelica (Mt 5,20-24)," *VD* 12 (1932) 161-167; E. Lohse, "synedrion," *TDNT* VII, 861-867; U. Luck, *Vollkommenheitsforderung*, 23-24; E. Lohmeyer, *Das Evangelium des Matthäus*, 120-125; *idem*, *Lord of the Temple* (Richmond: John Knox, 1962) 60-61; T. W. Manson, *The Sayings of Jesus*, 126, 155-156; W. Michaelis,

Law prohibiting murder; he simply says that internal anger and external expressions of anger are just as serious.[28] Likewise, in the second antithesis,[29] Jesus hardly revokes the letter of the Law prohibiting adultery; he simply states that lustful glances and a lustful heart are just as bad.[30]

The sixth antithesis (love of neighbor) offers more of a problem.[31]

"hodos," *TDNT* V, 67; O. Michel, "mimnēskomai," *TDNT* IV, 676; C. F. D. Moule, "Matthew V. 21, 22," *ExpT* 50 (1938-39) 189-190; *idem*, "St. Matthew's Gospel: Some Neglected Features," in *Studia Evangelica II* (ed. F. Cross; Berlin: Akademie Verlag 1964) 91-99, especially 95; *idem*, "The Angry Word: Matthew 5:21f," *ExpT* 81 (1969-70) 10-13; D. Müller, *Die Bergpredigt im Lichte der Strophentheorie*, 11-14; E. Nestle, "Matt. V.22," *ExpT* 11 (1899-1900) 381-382; W. Oesterley, "The Study of the Synoptic Gospels Exemplified by Matthew V.21, 22," *Expositor*, 6th series; 12 (1905) 17-32; E. Percy, *Botschaft*, 125-142; J. Peters, "On Matthew 5:21-22," *JBL* 11 (1892) 131-132; W. Raikes, "Thou Fool," *ExpT* 4 (1892-93) 514-515; K. Rengstorf, "hypēretēs," *TDNT* VIII, 539; T. Robinson, *The Gospel of Matthew* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1928) 38-39; G. Schmahl, "Die Antithesen der Bergpredigt," 288; G. Schrenk, "antidikos," *TDNT* I, 373-374; F. Schulthess, "Zur Sprache der Evangelien," *ZNW* 21 (1922) 241-258, especially 241; E. Schweizer, *Das Evangelium nach Matthäus*, 68-73; David Smith, "Raka!" *ExpT* 15 (1903-04) 235-237; K. Staab, *Das Evangelium nach Matthäus*, 33; G. Stählin, "orgizomai," *TDNT* V, 410, 419-420; R. Tannehill, "The 'Focal Instance,'" 384-385; C. Torrey, *The Four Gospels* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1933) 290; M. Weise, "Mt 5:21f — Ein Zeugnis sakraler Rechtsprechung in der Urgemeinde," *ZNW* 49 (1958) 116-123; J. Wellhausen, *Das Evangelium Matthaei*, 19-20; P. Wernberg-Møller, "A Semitic Idiom in Matt. V.22," *NTS* 3 (1956-57) 71-73; H. Windisch, *Der Sinn der Bergpredigt*, 56-57; H.-T. Wrege, *Überlieferungsgeschichte*, 58-61.

[28] Most of the authors distinguish between internal anger (*orgizomenos* in vs. 22a) and external expressions of it (*raka* and *mōre* in vs. 22b+c). Strictly speaking, however, there is no proof that *orgizomenos* refers only to internal feelings and not to external expression. This should warn us against taking the apparent step-like heightening of crime and punishment too seriously; the heightening is probably just a rhetorical device.

[29] Treatments of the second antithesis can be found in the commentaries cited in n. 27 above; we will not repeat the commentaries in any of the subsequent bibliographies on the individual antitheses. With the omission of the commentaries, a selected bibliography on the second antithesis would include (listed alphabetically by author): J. Behm, "kardia," *TDNT* III, 611-612; K. Berger, *Gesetzesauslegung*, 32, 307-312, 325, 439, 474; K. Bornhäuser, *Bergpredigt*, 70-71, 78; H. Braun, *Radikalismus* II, 28 n. 8, 110 n. 7; F. Büchsel, "epithymeō," *TDNT* III, 170; J. Dupont, *Les Béatitudes* I, 150; G. Eichholz, *Auslegung*, 78; F. Filson, "Broken Patterns," 228-229; V. Hasler, "Das Herzstück," 94; F. Hauck, "ballō," *TDNT* I, 527; *idem*, "moicheuō," *TDNT* IV, 729-734; P. Hoffmann, "Auslegung der Bergpredigt," 181; H. Hommel, "Herrenworte im Lichte sokratischer Überlieferung," *ZNW* 57 (1966) 1-23; J. Horst, "melos," *TDNT* IV, 559-560; G. Kilpatrick, *Origins*, 18-19; T. W. Manson, *The Sayings of Jesus*, 157; W. Michaelis, "blepō," *TDNT* V, 343; *idem*, "ophthalmos," *TDNT* V, 377; D. Müller, *Die Bergpredigt im Lichte der Strophentheorie*, 18; A. Oepke, "apollymi," *TDNT* I, 394-395; E. Percy, *Botschaft*, 143-144; J. Schneider, "aperchomai," *TDNT* II, 676; E. Schweizer, "sōma," *TDNT* VII, 1058; H. Seesemann, "holos," *TDNT* V, 174-175; G. Stählin, "koptō," *TDNT* III, 852-860; *idem*, "skandalizō," *TDNT* VII, 339-352; W. Thompson, *Matthew's Advice to a Divided Community* (Rome: Pontificio Istituto Biblico, 1970) 117; H. Windisch, *Der Sinn der Bergpredigt*, 57; H.-T. Wrege, *Überlieferungsgeschichte*, 64.

[30] The problem of whether the *pros* is to be understood as expressing purpose or result need not concern us here.

[31] Among the authors to be consulted are the following (listed alphabetically): G. Baumbach, *Das Verständnis des Bösen in den synoptischen Evangelien* (Berlin: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 1963) 71-72; K. Berger, *Gesetzesauslegung*, 135, 237, 244, 253,

At first glance, the antithesis does seem to revoke a command (or, more likely — taking the future as modal — a permission: "you need not love your adversary").[32] Permission to hate one's enemy is revoked while love of one's enemy is positively commanded. The problem here is that *misēseis ton echthron sou* is not to be found as such in the Torah. It is the only case in the antitheses where Jesus does not cite the words of the Torah or a close paraphrase before *egō de legō hymin.* The explanations of the origin of the last part of vs. 43 vary: a popular opinion or scribal commentary tied to the positive command, a Targumic expansion which was traditionally attached to the text, a reference to

416, 434, 444-445, 450; M. Black, *An Aramaic Approach,* 176-177, 181; J. Bonsirven, *Textes rabbiniques,* 114, 127; K. Bornhäuser, *Bergpredigt,* 108-111; H. Braun, *Radikalismus* II, 43 n. 1, 57 n. 1, 99 n. 3, 103 n. 1; H. Bruppacher, "Was sagte Jesus in Mt 5,48?" *ZNW* 58 (1967) 145; W. K. Clarke, "Studies in Texts: St. Matthew V. 48," *Theology* 20 (1930) 43; G. Delling, "teleios," *TDNT* VIII, 73-74; C. H. Dodd, *Gospel and Law* (N.Y.: Columbia University Press, 1951) 79; J. Dupont, *Les Béatitudes* I, 151-158, II, 170; *idem,* "'Soyez parfaits,'" 150-162; G. Eichholz, *Auslegung,* 99-103; J. Fenton, "Inclusio and Chiasmus in Mt," in *Studia Evangelica I* (ed. F. Cross; Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1959) 173-179, especially 176; P. Fiebig, *Jesu Bergpredigt,* 92-93; W. Foerster, "echthros," *TDNT* II, 814; H. Frankemölle, *Jahwebund,* 291-292; E. Fuchs, "Die vollkommene Gewissheit: Zur Auslegung von Matthäus 5,48," in *Zur Frage nach dem historischen Jesus*[2] (Tübingen: Mohr, 1965) 126-135; H. Greeven, "plēsion," *TDNT* VI, 316-317; *idem,* "proseuchomai," *TDNT* II, 807-808; G. Harder, "ponēros," *TDNT* VI, 558; V. Hasler, *Amen,* 59; *idem,* "Das Herzstück," 102-104; J. Heinemann, "Nochmals Matth. 5,42ff.," *BZ* 24 (1938-39) 136-138; P. Hoffmann, "Auslegung der Bergpredigt," 271; Joachim Jeremias, *New Testament Theology* I, 212-214; P. Joüon, "Matthieu 5,43," *RSR* 20 (1930) 545-546; L. Keck, "The Sermon on the Mount," in *Jesus and Man's Hope* II, 317; A. Kretzer, *Herrschaft,* 30, 295; O. Linton, "St. Matthew 5,43," *ST* 18 (1964) 66-79; E. Lohse, "'Ich aber sage euch,'" 200-201; U. Luck, *Vollkommenheitsforderung,* 29-58; T. W. Manson, *The Sayings of Jesus,* 54-55, 161-162; A. Marmorstein, "The Imitation of God (*Imitatio Dei*) in the Haggadah," in *Studies in Jewish Theology* (eds. J. Rabbinowitz - M. Lew; London: Oxford University Press, 1950) 106-121; E. Massaux, "Les relations," 281; O. Michel, "miseō," *TDNT* IV, 690; *idem,* "telōnēs," *TDNT* VIII, 103-104; G. Miegge, *Il sermone sul monte,* 147-158; A. Oepke, "diōkō," *TDNT* II, 229-230; E. Percy, *Botschaft,* 153-163; H. Preisker, "misthos," *TDNT* IV, 700, 717; J. Radermakers, *Au fil de l'évangile selon saint Matthieu* II, 96; J. Rausch, "The Principle of Nonresistance," 37; A. Sand, *Gesetz,* 50-55; C. Sandegren, "'Be Ye Perfect!'" *ExpT* 61 (1949-50) 383; H. Schlier, "anatellō," *TDNT* I, 351; G. Schmahl, "Die Antithesen der Bergpredigt," 294-295; W. Schmauch, "Reich Gottes," 12-13; K. L. Schmidt, "ethnikos," *TDNT* II, 372; H. Schoeps, "Von der Imitatio Dei zur Nachfolge Christi," in *Aus frühchristlicher Zeit* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1950) 286-301; G. Schrenk, "dikaios," *TDNT* V, 985-991; P. Schruers, "La paternité divine dans Mt 5,45 et 6,26-32," *ETL* 36 (1960) 593-624; S. Schulz, *Stunde,* 186; *idem, Q. Die Spruchquelle der Evangelisten,* 131-138; E. Schweizer, "huios," *TDNT* VIII, 389-390; O. Seitz, "Love Your Enemies," *NTS* 16 (1969-70) 39-54; E. Sidebottom, "'Reward' in Matthew 5:46, etc.," *ExpT* 67 (1955-56) 219-220; M. Smith, "Mt. 5.43: 'Hate Thine Enemy,'" *HTR* 45 (1952) 71-73; E. Stauffer, "agapaō," *TDNT* I, 46-47; H. Strack - P. Billerbeck, *Kommentar* I, 353-393, 487-496; W. Thompson, *Matthew's Advice,* 185; S. van Tilborg, *The Jewish Leaders,* 39; C. Torrey, *The Four Gospels,* 12, 291; W. van Unnik, "Die Motivierung der Feindesliebe in Lukas VI, 32-35," *NovT* 8 (1966) 284-300; H. Windisch, *Der Sinn der Bergpredigt,* 59-61; *idem,* "aspazomai," *TDNT* I, 499; H.-T. Wrege, *Überlieferungsgeschichte,* 93-94; E. Yarnold, "'Teleios' in St. Matthew's Gospel," in *Studia Evangelica IV,* 269-273.

[32] Cf. Joachim Jeremias, *New Testament Theology* I, 212-214; also, Joüon, "Matthieu 5,43," 545-546.

the position of the Zealots, or even a polemic against Qumran.[33] No matter what its origin, the last part of vs. 43 is not a citation of the written Torah. Consequently, Jesus' prohibition of hatred of enemies cannot be considered a revocation of the letter of the Torah.[34] One must admit, though, that of the three antitheses we have just examined No. 6 comes closest to revocation, since it is opposed to a number of passages in the OT where hatred of enemies is approved.[35] Granted the restricted OT idea of "neighbor" (compatriot, fellow member of the cultic community) and the OT sense of obligation to fight the enemies of God and His people, a command to love one's neighbor would almost inevitably be understood as permission not to love the "non-neighbor," especially the pagan foreigner (or evil Israelite) who persecutes God's holy people (or the individual just man).[36] The curses and expressions of hate in the Psalms show us that hatred of enemy need not be traced solely to Pharisaic *hᵉlākâ*. It is an attitude already embedded in the OT and sometimes seen as a religious duty (cf. Ps 139:19-22); for he who attacks the people of God (or holy members of that people) attacks God. But, within the problematic set up by 5:18, we are interested only in antitheses which revoke commands, permissions, or institutions expressly mentioned in the Torah. And the last part of 5:43, commanding or permitting hatred of enemies, is not found in the Torah. True, the Torah mentions extermination of the Canaanites, but this was meant to be a once-and-for-all act regarding a particular people. Such a directive cannot be equated with the general command of Mt 5:43.

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[33] Cf. Braun, *Radikalismus* II, 57 n. 1 (continued on 58); Smith, "Mt 5.43," 71-73; Grundmann, *Das Evangelium nach Matthäus*, 176-177, especially 176 n. 132; Michel, "miseō," 690; Seitz, "Love Your Enemies," 50-51.

[34] Note, by the way, that Jesus does not do away with the category of "enemy" in this antithesis; cf. Linton, "St. Matthew 5,43," 66-79. Nor does Jesus tell his disciples here that all men are their neighbors or brothers, or that all men are equally sons of God; cf. Schrenk, "patēr," 990-991; Schruers, "La paternité," 593-624; Schulz, *Q. Die Spruchquelle der Evangelisten*, 134.

[35] This is not to deny that the OT also contains a few commands and proverbs which tend rather towards love of enemies (at least personal enemies); cf. Ex 23:4-5; and possibly Prov 25:21-22. None of these texts would seem to extend this love to national enemies (i.e., enemies of the whole people and therefore of God).

[36] Whether the reference in Mt's redaction is predominantly to national enemies (pagan foreigners as opposed to fellow Israelites) or to individual enemies (as opposed to friends), or even to followers of a different tendency in Judaism (e.g., Qumran, or the Pharisees vis-à-vis the *ʿam hāʾāreṣ*), or to Jews vis-à-vis Christians, is of no importance to our problematic. — Linton, "St. Matthew 5,43," 71-72, wants 5:43 to mean, "you shall favor, prefer, your neighbor, not your enemy." The antithesis of Jesus would then mean: no, you are to favor, prefer, your enemy *instead of* your neighbor. But, as Linton himself admits, this runs counter to the sense of vss. 45+47.

D. The Antitheses Which Do Revoke the Letter of the Law: The Third (Divorce)

More important for the relation of the antitheses to 5:17-20 (especially 5:18) are the three antitheses which do seem to revoke the letter of the Law (i.e., some command, permission, or institution sanctioned by the Torah). We will take each of these antitheses (Nos. 3, 4, 5: divorce, oaths, talion)[37] and establish that each one does indeed revoke the Law.

The first and most difficult case to prove is the third antithesis, on divorce (5:31-32).[38] If we had before us the Markan or Q-form of the

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[37] Note that, in our division of the antitheses, both the antitheses which merely radicalize and those which revoke are drawn from both Q and M.

[38] The bibliography on the divorce question is almost limitless. However, a good deal of what has been written recently aims at popularization rather than at serious exegesis. We mention here (alphabetically arranged according to author) only some of the more important books and articles (omitting commentaries): A. Alberti, *Matrimonio e divorzio nella bibbia* (Milan: Massimo, 1962); H. Baltensweiler, *Die Ehe im Neuen Testament;* E. Bammel, "Markus 10,11f. und das jüdische Eherecht," *ZNW* 61 (1970) 95-101; W. Bäumlein, "Die exegetische Grundlage der Gesetzgebung über Ehescheidung," *Theologische Studien und Kritiken* 30 (1857) 329-339; J. Bauer, "Die matthäische Ehescheidungsklausel (Mt 5,32 und 19,9)," *Bibel und Liturgie* 38 (1964-65) 101-106; *idem,* "De coniugali foedere quid edixerit Matthaeus (Mt 5,31; 19, 3-9)," *VD* 44 (1966) 74-78; K. Berger, *Die Gesetzesauslegung Jesu* I, 508-575; J. Bonsirven, *Le divorce dans le Nouveau Testament* (Tournai: Desclée, 1948); K. Bornhäuser, *Bergpredigt,* 79-84; H. Braun, *Radikalismus* II, 89-113; H. von Campenhausen, *Entstehung,* 13-14; C. Carlston, "The Things That Defile," 86; W. K. Clarke, "The Excepting Clause in St. Matthew," *Theology* 15 (1972, 2) 161-162; H. Coiner, "Divorce and Remarriage," *CTM* 6 (1963) 541-554; H. Crouzel, "Le texte patristique de Matthieu V.32 et XIX.9," *NTS* 19 (1972-73) 98-119; E. Danieli, "Eccetto in caso di fornicazione (Mt 5,32; 19,9)," *Palestra del clero* 48 (1969) 1297-1300; D. Daube, "Precept and Example," "Public Retort and Private Explanation," and "Violence to the Kingdom," in *The New Testament and Rabbinic Judaism,* 67-89, 141-150, and 285-300 respectively; G. Delling, "Das Logion Mark. X 11 (und seine Abwandlungen) im Neuen Testament," *NovT* 1 (1956) 263-274; A. Dubarle, "Mariage et divorce dans l'évangile," *OrSyr* 9 (1964) 61-73; J. Dupont, *Mariage et divorce dans l'évangile* (Abbaye de Saint André: Desclée, 1959); *idem, Les Béatitudes* I, 117; G. Eichholz, *Auslegung,* 81-85; Fiebig, *Jesu Bergpredigt,* 57-61; T. Fleming, "Christ and Divorce," *TS* 24 (1963) 107-120; R. Gall, "Heutige Exegese des Scheidungsverbotes Jesu," in *Schweizerische Kirchenzeitung* 138 (1970) 512-514, 528-531, and 549-551; G. Giavini, "Nuove e vecchie vie per la lettura delle clausole di Mt. sul divorzio," *Scuola Cattolica* 99 (1971) 83-93; M. Goulder, *Midrash and Lection,* 291; H. Greeven, "Ehe nach dem Neuen Testament," *NTS* 15 (1968-69) 365-388; K. Haacker, "Ehescheidung und Wiederverheiratung im Neuen Testament," *TQ* 151 (1971) 28-37; V. Hasler, "Das Herzstück," *TZ* 15 (1959) 90-106; *idem, Amen,* 80; F. Hauck - S. Schulz, "pornē, porneia," *TDNT* VI, 579-595; E. Hirsch, *Frühgeschichte des Evangeliums* II, 65-68; P. Hoffman, "Auslegung der Bergpredigt," 188; *idem,* "Jesus' Saying About Divorce and Its Interpretation in the New Testament Tradition," in *Concilium: The Future of Marriage as Institution* (N.Y.: Herder, 1970) 51-66; U. Holzmeister, "Die Streitfrage über die Ehescheidungstexte bei Matthäus 5.32, 19.9," *Bib* 26 (1945) 133-146; A. Isaksson, *Marriage and Ministry in the New Temple* (Lund: Gleerup, 1965); G. Kittel, "legō, logos," *TDNT* IV, 100-136; A. Kretzer, "Die Frage: Ehe auf Dauer und ihre mögliche Trennung nach Mt 19,3-12," in *Biblische Randbemerkungen* (eds. H. Merklein - J. Lange; Stuttgart: Echter, 1974) 218-230; B. Leeming - J. Dyson, "Except It Be for Fornication?" *Scr* 8 (1956) 75-82; X. Léon-Dufour, "Bulletin d'exégèse du Nouveau Testament. Théologie de Matthieu et paroles de Jésus," *RSR* 50 (1962) 90-111; G. Lohfink, "Jesus und die Ehescheidung," in *Biblische Randbemerkungen,* 207-217; R. McConnell, *Law and*

logion (Mk 10:11-12; Lk 16:18),[39] we should face no great difficulty: both forms obviously revoke the institution of divorce, permitted by the Mosaic Law, and the bill of divorce, commanded by the Mosaic Law in cases of divorce.[40] But Mt's logion is complicated by the "exceptive

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Prophecy, 51-61; A. Mahoney, "A New Look at the Divorce Clauses in Mt 5,32 and 19,9," *CBQ* 30 (1968) 29-38; T. W. Manson, *The Sayings of Jesus*, 157-158; R. Martin, "St. Matthew's Gospel in Recent Study," *ExpT* 80 (1969) 132-136; E. Massaux, "Les relations," 275-278; H. Merkel, "Jesus und die Pharisäer," *NTS* 14 (1967-68) 194-208; J. Moignt, "Le divorce 'pour motif d'impudicité' (Matthieu 5,32; 19,9)," *RSR* 56 (1968) 337-384; J. O'Rourke, "A Note on an Exception: Mt 5:32 (19:9) and 1 Cor 7:12 Compared," *HeyJ* 5 (1964) 299-302; A. Ott, *Die Auslegung der neutestamentlichen Texte über die Ehescheidung* (Münster: Aschendorff, 1911); E. Percy, *Botschaft*, 144-145; R. Pesch, "Die neutestamentliche Weisung für die Ehe," *BLeb* 9 (1968) 208-221; A. Quacquarelli, "Gli incisi ellitici (5,32a e 19,9a) nella *compositio* di Matteo," *Vetera Christianorum* 6 (1969) 5-31; J. Rabinowitz, "The Sermon on the Mount and the School of Shammai," *HTR* 49 (1956) 79; L. Ramaroson, "Une nouvelle interprétation de la 'clausule' de Mt 19,9," *ScEs* 23 (1971) 247-251; J. Rausch, "The Principle of Nonresistance," 35; H. Richards, "Christ on Divorce," *Scr* 11 (1959) 22-32; L. Sabourin, "Les incises sur le divorce (Mt 5:32; 19:9)," *Bulletin de théologie biblique* 2 (1972) 80-86; F. Salvoni, "Eccetto il caso di fornicazione," *Ricerche bibliche e religiose* 3 (1968) 138-147; A. Sand, "Die Unzuchtsklausel in Mt 5,31.32 und 19,3-9," *MTZ* 20 (1969) 118-129; *idem*, *Gesetz*, 48-49; B. Schaller, "Die Sprüche über Ehescheidung und Wiederheirat in der synoptischen Überlieferung," in *Der Ruf Jesu und die Antwort der Gemeinde*, 226-246; G. Schmahl, "Die Antithesen," 291; W. Schmithals, *Paul and James*, 97 n, 6; R. Schnackenburg, "Die Bergpredigt Jesu und der heutige Mensch," in *Christliche Existenz nach dem Neuen Testament* (Munich: Kösel, 1967) I, 109-130; *idem*, "Die Ehe nach dem Neuen Testament," in *Schriften zum Neuen Testament* (Munich: Kösel, 1971) 414-434; H. Schoeps, "Restitutio principii als kritisches Prinzip der nova Lex Jesu," in *Aus frühchristlicher Zeit*, 271-285; K. Schubert, "Ehescheidung im Judentum zur Zeit Jesu," *TQ* 151 (1971) 23-27; S. Schulz, *Stunde*, 187; *idem*, *Q. Die Spruchquelle der Evangelisten*, 119-120; J. Schmid, *Matthäus und Lukas* (Freiburg: Herder, 1930) 220-221; J. Sickenberger, "Die Unzuchtsklausel im Matthäusevangelium," *Theologisch-Praktische Quartalschrift* 123 (1942) 189-206; *idem*, "Zwei Äusserungen zur Ehebruchklausel bei Mt.," *ZNW* 42 (1949) 202-209; R. Soulen, "Marriage and Divorce," *Int* 23 (1969) 439-450; E. Stauffer, "gameō," *TDNT* I, 648-657; H. Strack - P. Billerbeck, *Kommentar* I, 303-319; T. Stramare, "Matteo Divorzista," *Divinitas* 15 (1971) 213-235; A. Tafi, "'Excepta fornicationis causa' (Mt 5:32)," *VD* 26 (1948) 18-26; R. Tannehill, "The 'Focal Instance,'" 380-381; A. Vaccari, "La clausola sul divorzio in Matteo 5,32; 19,9," *RivB* 3 (1955) 97-119; *idem*, "Il divorzio nei vangeli," I, *Civiltà Cattolica* 107/II (1956) 350-359; II, *ibid.*, 475-484; B. Vawter, "The Divorce Clauses in Mt 5,32 and 19,9," *CBQ* 16 (1954) 155-167; H. Windisch, *Der Sinn der Bergpredigt*, 57; H.-T. Wrege, *Überlieferungsgeschichte*, 66-70; M. Zerwick, "De matrimonio et divortio in evangelio," *VD* 38 (1960) 193-212; *idem*, review of *Matrimonio e divorzio* by A. Alberti, *VD* 40 (1962) 96-99.

[39] Fortunately, our problematic does not oblige us to decide which form of the logion is the most primitive.

[40] Even here some objections against the idea of revocation might be made. (1) *Objection*: the text in Dt 24:1-4 is ambiguous because of all the *waw*'s; one cannot be certain as to where the apodosis begins. But it is possible that the apodosis begins at vs. 4, the only real prohibition being a prohibition against the return of the divorced wife to her first husband. In this view, vss. 1-3 all form the protasis, the presuppositions. This is the interpretation of the LXX. So Jesus' statement on divorce does not revoke any command or prohibition of the Torah. — *Answer*: whatever may be the case in the Hebrew text and the LXX, the understanding reflected in the Markan *Streitgespräch* (Mk 10:3-4: *eneteilato/epetrepsen Mōysēs biblion apostasiou grapsai;* Mt 19:7-8: *Mōysēs eneteilato dounai biblion apostasiou*) centers on the clause mentioning the giving of the bill of divorce. This is seen by the gospel writers as an independent command or permission. The same view is reflected in

clause" of 5:32, *parektos logou porneias* (cf. Mt 19:9, *mē epi porneia*$_i$).[41] Can these "exceptive clauses" be invoked in order to argue that the third antithesis does not revoke the Mosaic institutions of divorce and the bill of divorce?

Mt 5:31: *hos an apolysē*$_i$ ... *dotō*. The subordinate clause of LXX Dt 24:1 (*ean... grapsei autē*$_i$ *biblion apostasiou kai dōsei*) has been changed to a main clause in the imperative: *dotō*. To understand Mt's conception, one must argue from the way in which Mt and the tradition before him read (indeed, changed) the text — and not from the supposed meaning of the original Hebrew. (It is interesting to note that Josephus also understood Dt 24:1 as a command; cf. Berger, *Gesetzesauslegung* I, 512.) Mt understood the clause concerning the bill of divorce to be a command or permission, which is now revoked. (Permissions given by the Torah could be just as important as its commands. According to the rabbis, since the Gentiles did not have the Torah, they did not have permission to divorce; cf. Strack-Billerbeck, *Kommentar* I, 312.) (2) *Objection*: even granted Mt's reading of Dt 24:1-4, the text does not command divorce. Taking the practice of divorce for granted, Dt tries to protect the wife by making the husband give her a document which allows her to enter another marriage without being branded an adulteress. So the text says *not* "you must divorce," but "if you divorce, you must give a bill of divorce." — *Answer*: it is true that Dt 24 presupposes the institution of divorce, and does not evaluate it positively or negatively. Still, that very fact of taking over divorce as presupposed constitutes a *permission* for divorce, a permission which is then regulated and restricted in the apodosis. The Torah does not command divorce, but it does permit and sanction it. Jesus' prohibition of divorce revokes *both* the permission for divorce given in the Law *and*, by necessary consequence, the positive command to draw up the bill of divorce. So both the general institution of divorce (presupposed and *permitted* by the Law) and the specific institution of the bill of divorce (commanded in cases of divorce) are revoked. And, in general, we might add that trying to avoid the element of revocation in the third and fourth antitheses by saying that only the *object* of the command is abolished, not the command itself, ignores the problematic set up by Mt 5:18. We were told there that not the smallest part of the Law would pass away. By forbidding divorce and oaths, these antitheses abolish both the objects of the commands and, by necessary consequence, the individual commands concerned with these objects. In both antitheses, more than just the smallest part of the Law passes away. And, as a glance at any English dictionary will show, words like "annul," "abrogate," and "rescind" are wide enough in meaning to be applied properly to the third and fourth antitheses. And it is clear that, in the fifth antithesis, the Law itself is directly revoked. (3) *Objection*: all this only continues and deepens the ultimate humanistic intent of the Deuteronomic law. — *Answer*: granted, but (unlike antitheses Nos. 1 and 2) here the deepening involves revocation. Mt 5:18 spoke of not one yod or stroke passing from the Law: a great deal more than a yod or stroke falls in the third antithesis.

[41] That the meaning of these clauses is exceptive rather than preteritive or inclusive is generally admitted today. The preteritive and inclusive interpretations must rest on contorted philological arguments which do violence to the data. Against the inclusive, interpretative, or preteritive sense (with regard to Mt 19:9), cf. Zerwick, "De Matrimonio," 199. It is to be regretted that, after a careful and useful survey of opinions up until the beginning of the twentieth century, Ott decided in favor of the inclusive sense (*Auslegung*, 298-299). It is strange that the inclusive sense should be championed as recently as Hasler, *Amen*, 80; his treatment lacks a basic consideration of the data of Greek philology. For the philological data on *porneia*, cf. F. Hauck - S. Schulz, "pornē, porneia," *TDNT* VI, 579-595; but for a corrective to the simple equation of *porneia* and *moicheia* in certain passages, cf. Bauer, "De coniugali foedere," 74-78; cf. also n. 46 of this chapter.

1. ᶜErwat dābār *and the Dispute of Hillel and Shammai*

The most common way by which an abrogation of the Law is avoided in explanations of the third antithesis is the appeal to the *ᶜerwat dābār* of Dt 24:1, a phrase whose meaning was much disputed in the rabbinic schools of Hillel and Shammai.[42] The school of Hillel seized upon the phrase *ᶜerwat dābār* (literally, "the shame of a thing," "a shameful thing," a phrase quite ambiguous in itself) and stressed the *dābār*. The *dābār* was supposed to indicate that, besides something shameful, anything, any reason, was sufficient for divorce, including burnt food or another woman who was more attractive.[43] The stricter school of Shammai insisted on some weightier reason, some act of immodesty or impurity on the part of the wife.[44] The Shammaiites stressed the *ᶜerwat* in *ᶜerwat dābār*. The cause had to have some "shame" in it (hence the use of the inverted formula, *dᵉbar ᶜerwâ*). Many commentators, relying especially on Mt's version of the Markan *Streitgespräch* (Mk 10:2-12 = Mt 19:3-12), do not see in the third antithesis a revocation of Torah, but only an upholding of the stricter opinion of the Shammaiites.

But this view suffers from a number of difficulties. (1) It is not certain that the *parektos logou porneias* of 5:32 (still less the *mē epi porneiᾳ* of 19:9, in the very *Streitgespräch* which supposedly deals with the difference between Hillel and Shammai!) really translates the *ᶜerwat dābār* of Dt 24:1. True, in the rabbinic disputes, *ᶜerwat dābār* was at times turned around by the Shammaiites to read *dᵉbar ᶜerwâ*, for which *logos porneias* might seem to be a literal translation.[45] But the LXX translates *ᶜerwat dābār* in Dt 24:1 as *askēmon pragma;* in fact, the LXX never translates *ᶜerwâ* as *porneia.* Moreover, in ordinary Greek, *logos* can mean "case," "plea," "pretext," "ground," or "reason"; the use of *logou* in 5:32 does not necessarily reflect the Hebrew *dābār* of Dt

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[42] For what follows, cf. Strack-Billerbeck, *Kommentar* I, 312-319. More recently, this explanation has been defended by Hoffmann, "Jesus' Saying," 57-60; similarly, Merkel, "Jesus und die Pharisäer," 206-207; Carlston, "The Things That Defile," 86; Greeven, "Ehe," 379.

[43] When reading these "lax" opinions of the Hillelites, one must remember that it is a question of what the rabbis will *permit* as grounds for divorce, not what they command or urge.

[44] Sometimes it is incorrectly stated that the Shammaiites allowed divorce only in the case of adultery. That is not true. Acts of social immodesty (e.g., going outside with hair unfastened, spinning cloth in the street with armpits uncovered, and bathing in the same place as men) were also grounds; cf. the Babylonian Talmud's Gemara on the tractate *Gittin* 90a-b (the commentary on the Mishnah tractate *Gittin* 9, 10); cf. also Baltensweiler, *Ehe,* 38 n. 23; Isaksson, *Temple,* 45 n. 1. The basic difference, then, was that the Shammaiites kept the grounds for divorce within the general area of impurity or immodesty, while the Hillelites allowed almost any grounds.

[45] But Zerwick, "De Matrimonio," 202, states that this inversion was unusual; for the inversion and the basic dispute on the interpretation of Dt 24:1 by the Shammaiites and the Hillelites, cf. the Mishnah tractate *Gittin* 9, 10.

24:1. We are not saying at this point that a connection between Dt 24:1 and *parektos logou porneias* is excluded, but simply that it is not certain.

(2) If Jesus is presented here as taking the side of Shammai, then *porneia* would have to carry the Shammaiite meaning of immodest as well as impure acts — including going out on the street with one's hair unfastened, spinning cloth in the streets with one's armpits uncovered, and bathing where men bathe. Such a usage of *porneia* in the NT would be strange, to say the least. The basic ideas behind *porneia* are prostitution, unchastity, fornication, or any kind of unlawful sexual intercourse. One must stretch the meaning of *porneia* extremely far to make it fit all the grounds for divorce admitted by Shammai. Moreover, such a view (placed in the mouth of Jesus!) could hardly be called a "sharpening" of the Torah.

(3) To obviate this difficulty, some authors claim that Jesus is being stricter than Shammai, in that he limits the grounds for divorce to adultery alone. Now, it is not impossible to make the word *porneia* refer to adultery (unlawful intercourse involving the married) as opposed to fornication (unlawful intercourse between unmarried persons). But, as a rule, the NT, and even the LXX for the most part, use the various forms of *moicheia/moicheuō* for adultery. There are a few cases where *porneia* is used in the LXX in reference to the married, but usually this can be explained because of some additional idea (e.g., prostitution, religious infidelity).[46] More to the point, Mt uses the family of *moicheuō*-words when he wishes to speak of adultery. In our specific context, he has used *moicheuō* in 5:27 (citing the decalogue), again in 5:28 (to broaden the concept of *moicheuō*), and again within the third antithesis itself (5:32, with *moicheuō* and *moichaomai*, to declare remarriage after divorce adultery). If, in this context, Mt wished to mention adultery as grounds for divorce, he would almost *have* to use *moicheia* or some allied form of the verb. To introduce the alien word

[46] These passages (Sir 23:23; Hos 2:4) were used by Dupont against the *zᵉnût*-hypothesis of Bonsirven. But a good reply to Dupont is given by Zerwick in "De Matrimonio," 201-202. Two cases in the OT where *porneia* may equal *moicheia* for the sake of poetic rhetoric and variation hardly shed light on a juridical passage where the exact meaning of *porneia* is of great importance. The whole article of Zerwick should be consulted for a detailed defense of the Bonsirven-Baltensweiler view, as well as for a refutation of the other major positions (including Dupont's). J. Bauer, "De coniugali foedere," 74, also rejects Sir 23:23 and Hos 2:4 as proofs that *porneia* could mean simply adultery; some further idea (sacral prostitution, religious infidelity, prostitution) may be present. The idea of sacral prostitution is the reason for the appearance of *porneia* with *moicheuō*-words in prophetic passages rebuking Israel: Jer 3:9; Ez 16:32-34; 23:35-37, 43; Hos 4:13-14. Such passages should not be used to prove that the LXX and the NT would use *porneia* as a synonymn for an ordinary case of *moicheia* (*contra* Moignt, "Le Divorce," 358). Moignt's own solution (the innocent husband may take a second wife without being guilty of adultery, although the first marriage-bond remains) involves some contorted exegesis (357-374). A good treatment of the distinction between *moicheia* and *porneia* (a distinction regularly observed in the LXX and the NT) can be found in Isaksson, *Temple*, 132-135.

porneia with the meaning of adultery would hopelessly confuse the situation. And one cannot appeal to the fact that the noun *moicheia* is rare in the NT and that, for this reason, Mt used the more common *porneia.* True, *moicheia* is rare in the NT; but Mt is one of the few authors who *does* use it. *Moicheia* occurs twice in the NT: in Mk 7:22 and in the Matthean parallel, 15:19 (Jn 8:3 is probably a third example, but the reading is not certain). In both places in the synoptics, *moicheiai* are obviously distinguished from *porneiai,* which are also mentioned (Mk 7:21). Mt has even heightened the contrast by changing Mk's order and thus putting the two nouns back to back: *phonoi, moicheiai, porneiai, klopai* etc.[47] So Mt does know both words and he distinguishes between them. In the light of all this, to make *porneia* in 5:32 mean "adultery," when *moicheuthēnai* and *moichatai* appear in the same verse, is inadmissible. This leaves us, however, with a problem. If *porneia* in 5:32 does not mean "adultery," what does it mean?[48] We shall have to take up this question below.

(4) Mt 19:3-12 is often called upon to support the view that Mt's exceptive clause stems from the rabbinic dispute — but quite wrongly.[49] (a) Mt keeps and even moves forward the Markan participle *peirazontes.* In the synoptics, *peirazō* always signifies malice or evil intent (unlike Jn 6:6). It is used only of the devil (in the temptation story) and of the Jewish enemies of Jesus (though Lk 11:16 refers vaguely to some in the crowd). The perfect example of such testing/tempting is the story of the coin of tribute (Mk 12:13-17 = Mt 22:15-22). Mt, reordering some of Mk's material to create a prologue, begins the story by stressing the fact that the Pharisees asked the question in order to "catch him in speech," i.e., to force him into a dilemma whereby either choice would involve a damaging statement. And Jesus, knowing their malice (*ponēria*) asks: *ti me peirazete, hypokritai* (Mt 22:18). We find the same basic idea in Mt 19:3. But, if the Pharisees simply want to force Jesus to choose between Hillel and Shammai, how does this constitute a test or trap, set up with the evil intent of catching Jesus in speech? How could

[47] Even if we accept the order of a few later manuscripts, *moicheiai* and *porneiai* remain back-to-back in the Matthean text.

[48] Bornhäuser suggests (*Bergpredigt,* 82) that the sense is wild, even perverse, sensuality within marriage. But there still remains the problem of why *moicheia* is not used precisely when the verbs used are of the *moicheuō*-family. And what is the precise *Sitz im Leben* which moved Mt's church rather than any other early Christian group to insert the exceptive clause? Similar objections could be made against Schweizer, *Das Evangelium nach Matthäus,* 75, who interprets *porneia* as long-term infidelity.

[49] When Daube treats the *Streitgespräch* on divorce he comes to the interesting conclusion that Mk preserves the rabbinic patterns of thought and argumentation better than Mt; cf. "Precept and Example," 67-89, and "Public Retort and Private Explanation," 141-150. But Daube's own treatment suffers from an absence of form criticism and redaction criticism; Mk 10:2-12 is treated as though it were a videotape report.

either choice be especially damaging to Jesus? [50] We should realize that we have in Mt 19:3-12 not a word-for-word report of how Jesus disputed with some Jews c. A.D. 30, but a Christian composition drawn up with the final pronouncement of Jesus in mind from the beginning. [51] The *Streitgespräch* as it stands in Mt reflects the Christian awareness of having broken not only with a particular rabbinic opinion, but with the permission of Dt 24:1 itself. This is how Mt understands Jesus' response in 19:8-9, and his understanding governs his composition of the pericope from the beginning. (b) The view that Jesus has simply espoused the view of Shammai in 19:9 cannot be brought into line with Jesus' absolute command in 19:6, and still less with the question of the astonished disciples in 19:10 (a Matthean addition). The amazed exclamation that it is better not to marry does not make much sense if Jesus has just espoused the well-known position of Shammai, but makes perfect sense if Jesus has just forbidden all divorce.

(5) We might observe in general that espousing the opinion of Shammai over against that of Hillel hardly meshes with Mt's tendency to radicalize the Law (precisely in the antitheses!) and to upbraid the minimalizing casuistry of the rabbis (cf. the fourth antithesis, 5:33-37). [52]

(6) Finally, the view that Mt allows divorce in the case of adultery must come to terms with some grave practical difficulties in implement-

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[50] That a choice among the schools did constitute the trap is defended, unconvincingly, by Fleming, "Christ and Divorce," 107. Fleming gives a good review of various opinions, but his rejection of modern criticial methods dooms his approach. He ends up defending Augustine's preteritive solution. Baltensweiler, *Ehe*, 84, tries to deny that the question is a trap in Mt (as opposed to Mk): "Es ist keine Fangfrage mehr, sondern eine Sachfrage. . . ." But Baltensweiler is unable to explain the meaning and purpose of *peirazontes*. Bonsirven, *Le divorce*, 28, tries to give *peirazontes* a "more benign sense." But Mt's view of the Pharisees and his use of *peirazō* do not make a "benign" sense very likely. Mahoney, "A New Look," 33, tries to refer the *peirazontes* to a supposed intention of causing a disturbance in the crowd. The question aims at the *cause celèbre* of Antipas and Herodias. The crowd might have included followers of the Baptist, Herodians, devout Jews, and Nabateans. At this point, historical criticism gives way to imagination.

[51] Cf. Bauer, "De coniugali foedere," 77 n. 2. On 77, he discusses *kata pasan aitian* (Mt 19:3), which in semiticizing Greek could mean "some cause" (with the corresponding answer, "no cause") rather than "whatever cause one wishes" (the Hillelite position). On this, cf. also Zerwick, *Graecitas Biblica*, No. 192.

[52] It is sometimes stated that Qumran, with its radicalizing tendency, also forbade divorce; but the passages in question are not clear. E.g., CD 4: 19-21 could also refer to bigamy or to remarrying after the death of one's spouse (if the masculine suffix is pressed). At any rate, we do not have at Qumran the programmatic antithesis of *errethē-legō*. — As for the exact meaning of the Qumran texts, Ramaroson, "Une nouvelle interprétation," 247-251, thinks the reference is to bigamy. He believes the exceptive clauses also deal with bigamy. While we think his argumentation as regards Mt is weak, his position does not oppose our main point: the third antithesis does revoke the Torah. Berger, *Gesetzesauslegung* I, 524-526, sees as the basic idea a demand for only one marriage during one's lifetime (implicitly, then, divorce and remarriage would be forbidden).

ing such a rule. The discipline of Mt's church would supposedly look upon the divorce and remarriage of a husband and wife who had been faithful to each other during their first marriage as adultery. But a husband and wife who had committed adultery during their first marriage could enter new marriages which would not be considered adulterous. This seems to be a strange punishment for fidelity and a strange reward for adultery.[53] And, ultimately, any couple who wanted divorce and remarriage (for any reason whatever) could simply commit adultery and then dissolve the marriage. In other words, in practice, divorce could be obtained for any reason, provided adultery had been committed first.

2. *The Interpretation of H. Baltensweiler*

Having concluded that *porneia* does not mean "adultery" in 5:32 and that the reference to the opinion of Shammai is unlikely, is there any other explanation that does more justice to the philological data and the NT milieu? We think there is.

H. Baltensweiler has suggested that *porneia* in Mt 5:32 and 19:9 refers to an incestuous marriage (within the degrees of consanguinity or affinity prohibited by Lev 18:6-18).[54] Baltensweiler contends that we must see the problem of the exceptive clauses within two contexts: (1) marriage practices in the ancient Mediterranean world and (2) NT references to *porneia* which may reflect these practices.

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[53] Cf. Bauer, "Die matthäische Ehescheidungsklausel," 101.

[54] Baltensweiler, "Die Ehebruchsklauseln bei Matthäus. Zu Matth. 5,32; 19,9," *TZ* 15 (1959) 340-356, and much more fully in *Ehe*, especially 88-100. For details, these two works should be consulted; we give here only the most important points of his argument, together with some observations of our own. An earlier and less developed form of this solution can be found in Bonsirven, *Le divorce*, 46-59; he has a broader idea of *porneia*, including all invalid or illegitimate marriages. Still earlier forms of this position can be traced back to the nineteenth century: e.g., R. Cornely, and F. Patrizi, a professor at the Gregorian University. Others who have been associated with this explanation include F. Prat, A. Mancini, C. Spicq, B. Leeming and J. Dyson, R. Martin, P. Gaechter, P. Bonnard, J. Bauer, E. Danieli, A. Vaccari, M. Zerwick, A. Alberti, and W. K. Clarke. It is surprising to see how many authors seem to be simply ignorant of this theory, which, as can be seen, has not been recently invented. Those who do mention and reject it usually do not give detailed reasons for doing so; so, e.g., Eichholz, *Auslegung*, 81, 84-85. Sand, "Die Unzuchtsklausel," 126-127, does attempt a critique of Baltensweiler. But he fails to take seriously the converging evidence of Mt 5:32; 19:9; Acts 15:20, 29; 21:25; and 1 Cor 5:1. His objections are mainly unsubstantiated assertions. His own opinion, that *porneia* does mean prostitution (127) is unconvincing. The old question of *Sitz im Leben* arises. Are we to think that Mt's church had so many more cases of this kind than the churches of Mk, Lk, and Paul that it had to insert a proviso concerning prostitution into a logion of the Lord? Likewise, the critique of the Bonsirven-Baltensweiler view offered by Isaksson, *Marriage*, 130-131, is not convincing. His own solution (*porneia* = premarital unchastity) is subject to a criticism he makes of Baltensweiler, i.e., unduly restricting the range of *porneia* without sufficient grounds. But Isaksson's solution is certainly compatible with our general position, since he holds that the exceptive clause does not weaken Jesus' prohibition of divorce (140).

(1) Outside the stricter morals of the Jews (and, in this case, of the Romans), marriages which were incestuous according to the rules of Lev 18 were not uncommon in the ancient Mediterranean world. At times, this created a problem for a Gentile convert to Judaism. When he became a Jew (and thus became subject to the rules of Lev 18), did he have to dismiss a wife whom he had married in good faith, but who was within the prohibited degrees of consanguinity or affinity? The rabbis were divided. Some held the wife had to be dismissed. Others appealed to the fact that, by circumcision and proselyte-baptism, the convert had become "a new-born child." Therefore, since all his old blood-ties were wiped out, he should be allowed to keep his wife, despite the prohibited degree of relationship.

Since Mt's church [55] was heavily Jewish in its origins, and since, as the decades passed, it would be accepting more and more Gentile converts, it would in time face a proselyte problem not unlike that which the rabbis faced. Could baptism be deemed to wipe away the proselyte's previous ties, so that he could keep his wife, despite the forbidden degree of relationship? Did the Lord's prohibition of divorce help justify the continuance of the incestuous union? The question would be especially pressing for the earlier days of Mt's church, when its Jewish coloration was quite pronounced. The answer given was a firm no to what was considered laxism. [56] And so into the Lord's prohibition of divorce (as represented by Mk and Q) was inserted the proviso that this prohibition did not justify the continuance of an incestuous union contracted before baptism. The exceptive clauses can thus be viewed

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[55] We think it more likely that, in this important disciplinary matter, Mt reflects the traditional practice of his church and so is not introducing this proviso for the first time (so rightly Sand, "Die Unzuchtsklausel," 127-128). On the other hand, we do not think that the exceptive clause is original in these logia on divorce. The united witness of Mk 10:11, Lk 16:18 (= Q), and 1 Cor 7:10-11 makes it highly unlikely that the exceptive clause goes back to Jesus. Against the originality of the clause stand Braun, *Radikalismus* II, 89 n. 3, 110 n. 4; Schweizer, *Das Evangelium nach Matthäus,* 67, 75; Sand, *Gesetz,* 72; Bauer, "Die matthäische Ehescheidungsklausel," 105; Clarke, "The Excepting Clause," 161; Soulen, "Marriage," 448; Fiebig, *Bergpredigt,* 57; Wellhausen, *Das Evangelium Matthaei,* 21; Argyle, *The Gospel According to St. Matthew,* 51; Massaux, "Les relations," 276-277; Kretzer, "Die Frage," 220; Lohfink, "Jesus und die Ehescheidung," 208; Hirsch, *Frühgeschichte* II, 68; Manson, *The Sayings of Jesus,* 157-158; Hasler, "Das Herzstück," 97-98; Delling, "Das Logion," 269-270; Pesch, "Die neutestamentliche Weisung," 209; Richards, "Christ on Divorce," 31; Stauffer, "gameō," *TDNT* I, 650 n. 14; Greeven, "Ehe," 382. For the opposite view (i.e., the exceptive clause is original), see Vaccari, "Il divorzio nei Vangeli I," 357 n. 24; Fleming, "Christ and Divorce," 115-116; Berger, *Gesetzesauslegung,* 567-568 (but only for Mt 5:32), 575; Bonsirven, *Le divorce,* 41 (following Lagrange); Vawter, "The Divorce Clauses," 165; O'Rourke, "A Note," 299-302; Mahoney, "A New Look," 30 n. 5; Tafi, "'Excepta fornicationis causa,'" 20; Stramare, "Matteo Divorzista," 213-235; Isaksson, *Marriage,* 140. Hauck-Schulz, "pornē, porneia," 591, allow the originality of the exceptive clause as a possibility.

[56] Mt was not the first in his church to have radicalizing tendencies, as can be seen from the antitheses he received from M.

as a strict Jewish-Christian answer to the problem of Gentile Christian proselytes who entered the church with incestuous marriages.

This interpretation of the exceptive clauses is possible; but is it anything more than a mere possibility? In itself, *porneia* has such a wide range that it can mean practically any sort of sexual misconduct. As a matter of fact, this constitutes a problem for any interpretation of *porneia* in Mt 5:32 and 19:9. How does one justify any particular meaning in these passages? To make the hypothesis of incest really probable, we must be able to find other places in the NT where the same problem was met and solved in a similar way, with the word *porneia* equaling "incestuous union." [57] And we can find such passages.

(2) The key passage is the end of the so-called Apostolic Decree, Acts 15:29 (cf. 15:20; 21:25). Addressing Gentile Christians in Antioch, Syria, and Cilicia, the "Council of Jerusalem" did not impose circumcision or full observance of the Mosaic Law. But it did issue prohibitions against four practices especially abhorrent to Jews and Jewish Christians, since the prohibitions were considered to be binding on both Israelites and resident aliens. All four practices, interestingly enough, are forbidden by Lev 17 - 18: eating food sacrificed to idols, drinking blood, eating strangled meat (i.e., without drawing the blood from it), and *porneia* (in that precise order!). In this context of levitical purity (specifically Lev 17 - 18), *porneia* probably means an incestuous union. [58] Notice, too, how similar the situation in Acts is to that of Mt's church. [59] The Jewish-Christian nucleus is reaching out to the Gentiles, but living together in one church causes a number of difficulties. These difficulties are solved by imposing on the Gentile Christians certain laws from Lev. In both situations, the incestuous union is called *porneia* and is not permitted.

But, granted that the word *porneia* does not occur in Lev 18:6-18,

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[57] As Zerwick observes in a review of *Matrimonio e divorzio* by A. Alberti, Bonsirven's argument is weak in that he must pass over the Mishnah and search later texts in the Talmud to find uses of *zᵉnût* (*porneia*) as a technical term for illegitimate marriage (p. 98). As Zerwick points out (p. 99), it is better to search for such a use of *porneia* in the apostolic church.

[58] So E. Haenchen, *Die Apostelgeschichte*[12] (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1959) 390, 391 n. 1; and cf. what Haenchen says on p. 411. It is also possible that these four demands are considered indispensable because they count as "Noachide Laws," incumbent on all men. The Noachide Laws were later extended to seven among the Amoraim, but the number varied in the earlier Tannaim. Indeed, the *Encyclopaedia Judaica* (Jerusalem: Keter, 1971) XII, 1190, states in its article on "Noachide Law": "Acts (15:20) refers to four commandments addressed to non-Jews.... This list is the only one that bears any systematic relationship to the set of religious laws which the Pentateuch makes obligatory upon resident aliens...." It should be noted, however, that Lk himself refers not to any "Noachide Laws" but to "Moses" (Acts 15:21).

[59] It may be no accident that the Apostolic Decree is directed precisely to Antioch, Syria, and Cilicia. Mt's gospel came out of Syria, perhaps from Antioch (cf. Chapter I, under C).

do we have firm proof that *porneia* was used to describe an "incestuous union" during the NT period? We do, in 1 Cor 5:1: *holōs akouetai en hymin porneia, kai toiautē porneia hētis oude en tois ethnesin, hōste gynaika tina tou patros echein.* Here *porneia* clearly means an incestuous union, in fact, the type of incestuous union precisely forbidden in Lev 18:8.[60] Why did the Corinthians tolerate such a union so complacently (1 Cor 5:2)? One might appeal to the supposed gnostic or antinomian tendencies at Corinth, tendencies which took freedom from the Law to mean freedom from all moral constraint. But it is also possible that Jewish or Judaizing views had influenced the Corinthians in this matter. In the light of Paul's teaching on becoming "a new creature" through faith and baptism, some of the Corinthians may have adopted the rabbinical view that the proselyte had dissolved all his former relationships and was not living in an incestuous union. Like Mt's church and the Apostolic Decree, Paul judges otherwise.

The conclusion of our survey is that it is quite probable that, by inserting the exceptive clauses into the Markan and Q-forms of the prohibition of divorce, Mt's church had ruled out laxity on the question of proselytes with incestuous marriages. Consequently, what is being excluded by the *parektos logou porneias* clause is the lax practice of maintaining incestuous unions in the case of proselytes. Seen in this light, Mt 5:32 is just as much an abrogation of the Mosaic Law on divorce in Dt 24:1 as is Lk 16:18.[61]

E. The Antitheses Which Do Revoke the Letter of the Law: The Fourth (Oaths)

In the fourth antithesis we have the revocation of another important OT institution: oaths.[62] In a way reminiscent of the first antithesis, and unlike the second, third, fifth, and sixth antitheses, the OT citation at the beginning of the antithesis is made up of a number of citations or al-

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[60] Note the careful distinction in Lev 18; vs. 7 forbids relations with one's real father or mother; vs. 8 forbids relations with the wife of one's father — a wife who is clearly not one's own physical mother (the very case in 1 Cor 5:1).

[61] While we prefer the explanation of Baltensweiler, we cannot entirely exclude the "classical" view of Dupont, i.e., that the Matthean exceptive clauses do allow for a *separatio a mensa et toro* in the case of marital infidelity. Grundmann has practically the same view: divorce is permitted in the case of necessity, but not remarriage (*Das Evangelium nach Matthäus,* 163). But Dupont is left with the problem of explaining the use of *porneia* within the *moicheuō*-context of Mt 5:27-32. The reason that we do not give more time to a refutation of Dupont's thesis is that adopting Dupont's view as opposed to Baltensweiler's makes no difference to our main point: the third antithesis does revoke the Mosaic legislation on divorce. For the same reason we do not bother to treat less likely views, such as the inclusive or the interpretative ("biographical," "interim") sense of the Matthean clauses. Moreover, all these views labor under the same difficulty as the Hillel-Shammai interpretation: a correct explanation of the meaning of *porneia* and a convincing definition of the clauses' *Sitz im Leben* within the synoptic tradition.

lusions from the Torah: e.g., Ex 20:7; Lev 19:12; Num 30:3; Dt 23:22 (cf. LXX Ps 49:14).[63] As the OT texts show, the word "oath" covers both what we would call an oath and (perhaps more frequently) what we would call a vow.[64] Both ideas seem to be present in the fourth antithesis, although vs. 37 seems to suppose the oath idea.[65]

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[62] With the omission of commentaries, a bibliography on the fourth antithesis (arranged alphabetically according to author) would include: G. Baumbach, *Das Verständnis des Bösen,* 68-70; K. Bornhäuser, *Bergpredigt,* 86-89; H. Braun, *Radikalismus* II, 28 n. 8, 80-82; F. Büchsel, "apodidōmi," *TDNT* II, 167; D. Daube, "Matthew v. 38f," *JTS* 45 (1944) 177-187; J. Dupont, *Les Béatitudes* I, 150; G. Eichholz, *Auslegung,* 86-91; P. Fiebig, *Bergpredigt,* 63-67, 83-88; E. Haenchen, "Matthäus 23," 39; G. Harder, "ponēros," *TDNT* VI, 561; V. Hasler, "Das Herzstück," 98-100; *idem, Amen,* 81-82; F. Hauck, "perissos," *TDNT* VI, 61-62; P. Hoffmann, "Auslegung," 182; H. Holtzmann, *Lehrbuch der neutestamentlichen Theologie*[2] (Tübingen: Mohr, 1911) I, 191-192; R. Hummel, *Auseinandersetzung,* 57; G. Kilpatrick, *Origins,* 20; E. Kutsch, "'Eure Rede aber sei ja ja, nein nein,'" *EvT* 20 (1960) 206-218; R. McConnell, *Law and Prophecy,* 62-64; T. W. Manson, *The Sayings of Jesus,* 158-159; E. Massaux, "Le texte du sermon sur la montagne de Matthieu utilisé par saint Justin," *ETL* 28 (1952) 411-448; *idem, Influence de l'évangile de saint Matthieu sur la littérature chrétienne avant saint Irénée* (Louvain: Publications universitaires, 1950) 484-485; *idem,* "Les relations," 278; W. Michaelis, "leukos," *TDNT* IV, 246-247; G. Miegge, *Il sermone sul monte,* 132-134; P. Minear, "Yes or No: the Demand for Honesty in the Early Church," *NovT* 13 (1971) 1-13; C. F. D. Moule, "St. Matthew's Gospel: Some Neglected Features," 97; D. Müller, *Die Bergpredigt,* 23-25; O. Olivieri, "Nolite iurare omnino," *Bib* 4 (1923) 385-390; E. Percy, *Botschaft,* 147-148; E. Rietschel, "Das Verbot des Eides in der Bergpredigt," *Theologische Studien und Kritiken* 79 (1906) 393-418; *idem,* "Nochmals das Verbot des Eides in der Bergpredigt," *Theologische Studien und Kritiken* 80 (1907) 609-618; H. Sasse, "gē," *TDNT* I, 679; G. Schmahl, "Die Antithesen," 292; O. Schmitz, "thronos," *TDNT* III, 165; R. Schnackenburg, "Die Bergpredigt Jesu und der heutige Mensch," 124-125; J. Schneider, "horkos," *TDNT* V, 457-462; *idem,* "epiorkeō," *TDNT* V, 466-467; *idem,* "omnyō," *TDNT* V, 176-185; S. Schulz, *Stunde,* 190; G. Stählin, "Zum Gebrauch von Beteuerungsformeln in Neuen Testament," *NovT* 5 (1962) 115-143; H. Strack - P. Billerbeck, *Kommentar* I, 321-337; E. Sutcliffe, "'Not to Swear at All.' Matthew V,34," *Scr* 5 (1952) 68-69; C. Torrey, *The Four Gospels,* 11, 291; H. Traub, "ouranos," *TDNT* V, 514-516; H. Windisch, *Der Sinn der Bergpredigt,* 57; H.-T. Wrege, *Überlieferungsgeschichte,* 70-74; for further bibliography, see the article by Kutsch and the various articles in the *TDNT.*

[63] As Strack-Billerbeck point out (*Kommentar* I, 326), Ex 20:7 was often referred by Jewish tradition to the idle or lightly taken oath, while Lev 19:12 was referred to the false oath. But other texts interpret Ex 20:7 in reference to both idle and false oaths.

[64] See Strack-Billerbeck, *Kommentar* I, 321-325, for the various divisions of oaths. — As for *epiorkeō,* Schneider, "epiorkeō," 467, points out that the verb can mean (1) to swear falsely, commit perjury; (2) to break a sworn oath, to transgress a vow; (3) to swear. Granted the wide meaning of *horkous* in Mt 5:33, the first two meanings are probably both present. It is sometimes claimed (Lohmeyer, *Das Evangelium des Matthäus,* 132) that the second OT citation in 5:33 (with *apodōseis*) refers only to vows, and so even the first citation should be restricted to vows; similarly, Klostermann, *Das Matthäusevangelium,* 46. But it is interesting to note that, instead of the clear *euchas* ("vows," "prayers," as in LXX Ps 49:14), Mt has written the broader *horkous.* It would be wise, then, not to restrict the meaning of 5:33 to vows alone, especially since the rabbinic texts show that the dividing line between oaths and vows was fluid (cf. the following note). Arguing that the last part of vs. 33 is a later addition, Schweizer, *Das Evangelium nach Matthäus,* 70, wants to restrict Jesus' original prohibition to oaths, not vows; this, too, is an unwarranted restriction of the meaning; similarly, Manson, *The Sayings of Jesus,* 158.

[65] But it remains difficult to distinguish the two. Both are solemn affirmations

At first glance, we seem to be dealing again (as in the case of divorce) with an institution *permitted* by the Mosaic Law, and so with a question of revocation of a permission, not a command, of the Torah. The *permission* given by the Torah seems to be what is directly revoked; and, by necessary consequence, all the commands of the Torah regarding oaths or vows are also revoked. But the fact is that, in a few cases, a vow or oath was specifically commanded or imposed by the Law. In these cases, the command of the Torah is directly revoked (e.g., the oath imposed on the neighbor who was supposed to safeguard a man's goods, when those goods are stolen or lost, Ex 22: 6-7, 10; the oath imposed upon a woman suspected of adultery, Num 5:19-22; cf. also the general, unconditional commands in Dt 6:13; 10:20). Moreover, after Num 30 has treated the validity and annulment of vows/oaths, vs. 17 sums up the chapter thus: "These are the statutes (*haḥuqqîm, dikaiōmata*) which Yahweh commanded (*ṣiwwâ, eneteilato*) Moses." We see, then, that, unlike divorce, the oath/vow is evaluated positively by the Law in its commands. In the fourth antithesis, more than one yod or stroke is falling from the Law — and this time we are dealing with "yods" and "strokes" which were positively valued and occasionally commanded. Permission for, and, in some cases, the obligatory use of, the important social-religious-legal institution of oaths/vows are being revoked.[66]

But again, there are a number of objections that are made to the idea of revocation in the fourth antithesis. We can reduce the various objections to three.

(1) Unlike the similar statement in Jas 5:12 ("let your yes be [a

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of a truth, both having some connection with God. The oath, in particular, is closely tied to the divinity, since it involves calling upon God directly or indirectly, asking Him to act as witness — and perhaps to act to avenge a lie, since an oath is really a kind of conditional curse upon oneself. The basic difference between oaths and vows is that what we today call an oath refers to the truth about a past or present fact, while a vow is a statement (professed to be true) that something will be a fact or will be done in the future. An oath is more common in a judicial context, a vow more common in daily life. Another difference, according to the rabbis, was that the oath demanded the naming of God (directly or by a substitute), while a vow did not; cf. Strack-Billerbeck, *Kommentar* I, 327. — Rietschel, in "Das Verbot," 393-418, and in "Nochmals," 609-618, tries to restrict 5:33-37 to a prohibition of promissory oaths. But he proceeds not from the Matthean text, but from various presuppositions (e.g., Jesus the fulfiller of the Law could not revoke a commandment, man can guarantee the truth of the past or present, but not of the future). Like many other writers in this area, Rietschel is more concerned about the original meaning of the phrase in the mouth of the historical Jesus, and with possible conflicts between this message and the practice of Jesus, Paul, and Christians, than he is with the redactional sense of the Matthean text.

[66] On the oath at Qumran, cf. Braun, *Radikalismus* II, 81. Qumran certainly exacted a solemn oath upon entrance into the community. It is sometimes claimed that all other oaths were avoided; cf. Schneider, "omnyō," 170; Lohmeyer, *Das Evangelium des Matthäus*, 132. But CD 9:11-12 states that the oath of cursing which serves to unmask a thief may be demanded only by the judges; cf. again Schneider, "horkos," 461. The text of CD in the enumeration of Charles (*Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha* II, 824) is found at X, 7.

genuine] yes and your no [a genuine] no"), vs. 37 has both *nai*'s and both *ou*'s as predicate nominatives: "let your speech be yes, yes, no, no."[67] Some Jewish writings, it is claimed, consider the double yes or the double no equivalent to an oath. We find, for instance, in the longer version of *Slavonic Enoch* (also called *2 Enoch*) 40:1: "I swear to you, my children, but I swear not by any oath, neither by heaven nor by earth, nor by any other creature which God created. The Lord said: 'There is no oath in me, nor injustice, but truth.' If there is no truth in men, let them swear by the words 'yea, yea,' or else 'nay, nay.'"[68]

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[67] The question of the *Traditionsgeschichte* behind Mt 5:37 and Jas 5:12 need not detain us here. Suffice it to say that, of the two works, Jas seems to represent a more primitive stage of the tradition (so many commentators since M. Dibelius on, *contra* Schniewind, Percy, Lenski; cf. Eichholz, *Auslegung*, 89). W. Bauer, in his entry under *nai*, notes the difference between the two forms. He translates the double words in Mt 5:37 simply as "a clear yes and a clear no, nothing more," and notes that the double *nai* is witnessed as far back as Archilochus in the seventh century B.C. Bauer says nothing about the doubled form in Mt being an oath. — Kutsch, "'Eure Rede,'" 210 n. 12, lists a number of exegetes who take Jas 5:12 as containing a doubled yes and no, like Mt 5:37; the article before the first *nai* and *ou* is taken as the sign of a well-known formula; on this approach, cf. Stählin, "Zum Gebrauch," 118. But this seems to be a forced harmonization. Unfortunately, Kutsch's own argument against an oath formula is farfetched. He appeals to Assyrian texts (of Assarhaddon and the Šurpu) which show "yes-no" to be an expression not of a fixed oath but of falsity of content. He then supposes that a "yes-yes, no-no" formula also existed as an expression of complete truthfulness of content. Thus, Kutsch sees "yes-yes, no-no" not as a formula of asseveration which could easily become another oath, but only a way of demanding simple, direct truthfulness. The basic position of Kutsch is quite correct, but his proof (appeal to Assyrian texts) is weak. The distance of many centuries and the lack of the "yes-yes, no-no" form in the Assyrian texts make the comparison most dubious. Strange to say, Baumbach, *Verständnis*, 68, favors Kutsch's theory. — Surprisingly, Blass-Debrunner No. 432, 1, hold that the reading of 5:37a in the editions of Aland, Merk, and Nestle is corrupt. The "correct" and "well attested" (?) reading is claimed to be *estō de hymōn to nai nai kai to ou ou*, as in Koridethi and some of the Fathers. While this solution would remove a basic problem, the suggested reading is anything but "well attested"; assimilation to Jas 5:12 is its simplest explanation. — Torrey, *The Four Gospels* 11, 291, thinks that both Jas and Mt are translating the same Aramaic logion, but, while Jas translated correctly, Mt blundered. Our view of Mt outlined in Chapter I does not lend itself to this interpretation.

[68] Translation by N. Forbes - R. Charles in *Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha* II, 460. It is interesting to note that, even in this passage (where one is ordered to swear by "yes-yes" and "no-no"), the type of swearing ordered is explicitly said *not* to be an oath: "... but I swear not by an oath." It is not exactly correct, then, to cite this passage as an example of "yes-yes, no-no" being an oath. Also of interest is the fact that our passage is missing in the shorter recension (Charles' B version). More serious still is the observation by D. Russell, *The Method and Message of Jewish Apocalyptic* (London: SCM, 1964) 61-62, that, while the date of composition for the book has commonly been placed in the first century A.D., this dating has been strongly challenged. Some scholars claim that the book cannot be earlier than the seventh century A.D. While Russell is willing to give *Slavonic Enoch* "the benefit of the doubt," the author points out that the book is by no means free of Christian influence and may indeed be the work of a Christian. — In short, when we consider that (1) the book could be as late as the seventh century A.D.; (2) its manuscripts date from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries; (3) the work shows Christian influence if not Christian authorship; (4) the key passage, 49:1, is missing in the shorter recension; and (5) even in the longer recension "yes-yes, no-no" is

One might infer from this passage that Mt is substituting a simple oath, without reference to God, for oaths which refer directly or indirectly to God. Thus, there would be no revocation. But the difficulty with this argument from Jewish parallels is that many of the works from which they are taken are more recent than Mt. *Slavonic Enoch,* for instance, could be as late as the seventh century A.D., although a date in the first century A.D. has also been defended. And the rabbinic parallels, while indeed containing venerable tradition, come to us in a compilation first set down at the end of the second or the beginning of the third century (if, indeed, Judah ha-Nasi's Mishnah was put into writing even then). It is true that statements similar to Mt 5:33-37 can be found in these rabbinic texts. But the differences as well as the similarities must be recognized.[69]

More to the point, as far as the understanding of Mt is concerned, is the categorical command in vs. 34 *mē omosai holōs.* This is the basic Christian command of the fourth antithesis, and everything which follows must be judged in its light. Placed under the rubric of vs. 34a, vs. 37a cannot be understood as an oath. Mt takes it to be the emphatic mode of affirmation and negation, used by a man who does not employ oaths.

There is a further point here that should be pursued. What exactly does Mt find objectionable in oaths? Those critics who try to interpret all the antitheses in relation to the command of love of neighbor try to see here a demand to love one's neighbor by always speaking the plain truth to him, without the use of special formulas to assure honesty.[70] But a close examination of vss. 33-37 will show that duty

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not called an oath, we cannot avoid the conclusion that *Slavonic Enoch* should not be used to establish the meaning of Mt 5:37a.

[69] Cf. Schneider, "omnyō," 180-181, especially n. 50. Schneider notes that while Schniewind and Meyer contend for the oath character of Mt 5:37, the rabbinic texts are not unambiguous. While some texts do view the formula as an oath, others do not. The few examples of the oath character of "yes" and "no" given by Strack-Billerbeck (*Kommentar* I, 336-337) come from the third and fourth centuries. Some of the examples in Strack-Billerbeck seem to mean simply that we should take our plain affirmations as seriously as oaths. Other examples, while showing that a doubled "yes" or "no" indicated a strengthening of an affirmation, do not prove that the formula was considered an oath. After giving various rabbinic examples, Stählin likewise observes that they do not prove the oath character of Mt 5:37a. He remarks in "Zum Gebrauch," 119 n. 2: "Die Verdoppelung eines Wortes oder eines Passus fand in der Antike eine sehr vielfältige Anwendung, meist im Dienst des Nachdrucks und der Dringlichkeit einer Aussage...." — It is sometimes held that, vis-à-vis Jas 5:12, Mt 5:33-37 displays a falling away from the original stringency of Jesus' message (so even Stählin, "Zum Gebrauch," 140). But this view rests on (1) the supposition that 5:37a has an oath character; or (2) the ignoring of the basic statement of the antithesis — 5:34a! Since *holōs* is precisely the element missing in the Jas passage, one could just as easily (and uselessly?) argue that Jas witnesses a falling away from the radicalism reflected in Mt. In fact, Holtzmann, *Lehrbuch* I, 191-192, holds that Jesus himself rejected only the misuse of oaths, while Mt's "Essenism" led the evangelist to prohibit all oaths.

[70] E.g., Schneider, "omnyō," 178, tries to ground Christ's total prohibition in the honesty demanded of a man belonging to the new aeon which Christ proclaims.

towards one's neighbor is not the thrust of the fourth antithesis. From vs. 33 onwards, the constant emphasis is on the relation of the oath taker to the Lord (vs. 33: *tōi kyriōi*), not to his neighbor. Vss. 34-35 forbid a number of typical oaths because they refer indirectly to God. These formulas try "to have it both ways": they casuistically avoid a direct naming of God (and thus perhaps avoid a formula which would be absolutely binding), while still trying to involve Him as witness and guarantor. Vs. 36 goes further; it forbids even the seemingly harmless oath by the hair of one's head — out of deference to the One alone who can make it white or black (a reference to youth and old age), the One alone who controls our life, growth, and final fate. In Mt's mind, then, oaths are wrong not because they injure our neighbor's right to have the truth from us at all times, but because they injure God's right to be God. In other words, man, by his oath/vow, infringes on God's transcendence, majesty, and uniqueness as the one only Lord of creation. Man may not drag God into his petty affairs, man may not control God by demanding that He, the all-truthful God, bear witness to man's sometimes truthful statements. As the well-known axiom beloved of the Germans puts it, *Gott ist nicht verfügbar.* [71] It is this impious reference to and claim on God in every oath that Mt finds objectionable. But, for Mt, an oath is an oath precisely because of this objectionable reference and claim. Accordingly, all oaths, no matter how indirect their reference to God, are to be rejected. That is why Mt will allow nothing but an emphatic yes or no — an expression that in no way refers to God, and so an expression that in no way qualifies as an oath. Consequently, not only the absolute prohibition of vs. 34a but also Mt's very understanding of an oath/vow show that Mt does not consider vs. 37a as a simpler type of oath.

(2) A second objection against revocation is that the *mēte*-clauses in vss. 34b-36 show that only certain oaths are being forbidden, i.e., the oaths Jesus specifically lists. [72] But the absolute command of vs. 34a

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While this tone is certainly present in the Sermon on the Mount as a whole, it is not the precise point of 5:33-37. Schweizer, *Das Evangelium nach Matthäus*, 77, tries to see the fourth antithesis as part of Jesus' call to be free for a life that is totally oriented towards others. This is typical of the tendency to put all the antitheses under the rubric of love of neighbor.

[71] The axiom is applied to this particular passage by Schmahl, "Die Antithesen," 292; similarly, Fiebig, *Bergpredigt*, 88. The main point of the fourth antithesis is reverence before the transcendent Creator, not charity (or even truthfulness) before our fellow men. Jesus says nothing about our oaths or vows being untruthful. Truthful or not, they are all guilty of *lèse majesté*.

[72] Behind this position often stands the idea that Jesus is not forbidding all oaths, but simply the misuse of oaths (e.g., lightly taken oaths in daily speech, or Pharisaic casuistry); cf. Kutsch, "'Eure Rede,'" 208, who lists the authors favoring this idea, only to oppose it strongly himself. Strack-Billerbeck, *Kommentar* I, 328, also protest against attempts to deprive *holōs* of its force; so, too, Schneider, "omnyō," 178. Strange to say, while the rabbis strove to limit the use of oaths, they never

(*mē omosai holōs*) shows rather that the list in vss. 34b-36 is merely an illustrative, not a taxative enumeration. This is borne out by the placement of vs. 36 after vss. 34b-35. The sense of the placement of this hardly noteworthy oath after the magniloquent oaths [73] in vss. 34b-35 is: no, not even such a seemingly harmless oath is to be allowed. Obviously, then, the idea is to give examples, a sampling, not a complete inventory. Moreover, any attempt to understand vss. 34b-36 as a taxative list would be opposed to Mt's radicalizing, anti-casuistic approach to the Law.

(3) A third objection points to the fact that, in material allied to that of 5:34b-35, Jesus presupposes the legitimacy of oaths (Mt 23:16-22). In answer, we should note, first of all, that Mt 23 is made up of very heterogeneous material, coming from different strata of the tradition. As we have seen, 23:2-3 does not express Mt's view of the state of affairs in his own time. At best, it makes literal sense for him only as a statement of Jesus during his public ministry, before the great turning point of his death-resurrection. This should make us cautious about immediately referring material in ch. 23 to the present state and practice of Mt's church. Secondly, vss. 16-22 contain a polemic against the hair-splitting casuistry of the scribes and the Pharisees, as exemplified in their *hᵃlākōt* on oaths. The tone is *ad hominem,* almost mocking. Presupposing the scribal practice, Jesus makes fun of it. [74] Again, we can hardly draw conclusions about the legitimate practice of Mt's church. [75] Finally, Mt cannot possibly understand 23:22 as affirming the legitimacy of swearing by heaven, since Mt explicitly rejects that oath in his illustrative list (5:34b).

We conclude, then, that the fourth antithesis does abrogate provisions of the Torah.

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articulate the complete rejection of oaths seen at times among the Greek pagan writers (for texts, cf. Schneider, "omnyō," 179-180). As Schneider notes, Philo disliked oaths, but did not (with the Torah, could not) totally forbid them. Even Philo would allow oaths by earth, heaven, etc. — Braun, *Radikalismus* II, 80-81 (especially 80 n. 6) is too hasty in concluding that, while the historical Jesus forbade all oaths, Mt forbids only certain oath formulas. Hasler, "Das Herzstück," 98-100, and *Amen,* 81-82, holds that Mt is opposing only Pharisaic casuistry, not statutes of the Torah; but he cannot explain away Mt 5:34+37. The same critique can be made of Massaux, "Les relations," 278, who wants to restrict the prohibition to lightly taken oaths. We Christians must also beware of *sklērokardia.*

[73] For rabbinic parallels (or lack thereof), cf. Strack-Billerbeck, *Kommentar* I, 332-334.

[74] The whole matter is put well by Schneider, "omnyō," 183: "The concern of Jesus here is simply to reduce the casuistry of the scribes and Pharisees *ad absurdum.* The basic question of the legitimacy of oaths is not at issue. The chapter does not contain an address to the disciples but a sharp polemic against Pharisaism." Similarly, Stählin, "Zum Gebrauch," 121 n. 3.

[75] This point is missed by Haenchen, "Matthäus 23," 39.

F. The Antitheses Which Do Revoke the Letter of the Law: The Fifth (Talion)

In the fifth antithesis,[76] Jesus revokes the *jus talionis* of Ex 21:24, Lev 24:20, and Dt 19:21. This is perhaps the clearest and least disputable case of annulment in the antitheses. Probably one cannot even speak of a *permission* being annulled. Such introductory phrases as Dt 19:21a ("and your eye shall show no pity") indicate an obligatory command rather than a permission. The same note of obligation in seeing strict justice done is clear throughout the context of the three passages cited.[77]

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[76] With the omission of commentaries, a bibliography of works (alphabetically arranged according to author) on the fifth antithesis would include: E. Archer, "Matthew v. 39," *ExpT* 42 (1930-31) 190-191; G. Baumbach, *Verständnis,* 70-71; K. Berger, *Gesetzesauslegung* I, 377-380; M. Black, *Aramaic Approach,* 190; K. Bornhäuser, *Bergpredigt,* 92-103; H. Bryant, "Matthew v. 38, 39," *ExpT* 48 (1936-37) 236-237; H. Clavier, "Matthieu 5:39 et la non-résistance," *RHPR* 37 (1957) 44-57; W. Davidson, "Note on Matthew v. 39," *ExpT* 22 (1910-11) 231; D. Daube, 'Matthew v. 38f.," *JTS* 45 (1944) 177-187; *idem,* "Eye for Eye," in *The New Testament and Rabbinic Judaism,* 254-265 (a revised version of the previous article); J. Dupont, *Les Béatitudes* I, 150, especially n. 4; G. Eichholz, *Auslegung,* 92-97; P. Fiebig, *Bergpredigt,* 97; G. Harder, "ponēros," *TDNT* VI, 561-562; V. Hasler, "Das Herzstück," 100-102; *idem, Amen,* 82-83; U. Holzmeister, "Vom Schlagen auf die rechte Wange (Mt 5:39)," *ZKT* 45 (1921) 334-336; G. Kilpatrick, *Origins,* 20; R. McConnell, *Law and Prophecy,* 65; T. W. Manson, *The Sayings of Jesus,* 50-52, 159-160; E. Massaux, "Les relations," 279-280; G. Miegge, *Il sermone sul monte,* 137-142; J. Moffatt, "Matthew V. 39," *Expositor,* 8th series, 7 (1914) 89 and 8 (1914) 188-189; D. Müller, *Bergpredigt,* 25-26; F. Nägelsbach, "Die hohe Forderungen der Bergpredigt," *Neue kirchliche Zeitschrift* 30 (1919) 510-532; E. Percy, *Botschaft,* 119, 148-150; J. Rausch, "The Principle of Nonresistance," 35-36; A. Sand, *Gesetz,* 49-50; G. Schmahl, "Antithesen," 293-294; S. Schulz, *Q. Die Spruchquelle der Evangelisten,* 121-128; G. Stählin, "aiteō," *TDNT* I, 191; H. Strack - P. Billerbeck, *Kommentar* I, 337-350; E. Sutcliffe, "'Not to Resist Evil.' Matthew V, 39," *Scr* 5 (1952) 33-35; R. Tannehill, "The 'Focal Instance,'" 376-384; C. Torrey, *The Four Gospels,* 11, 291; J. Weismann, "Zur Erklärung einer Stelle der Bergpredigt," *ZNW* 14 (1913) 175-176; H. Windisch, *Der Sinn der Bergpredigt,* 58; H.-T. Wrege, *Überlieferungsgeschichte,* 76-82.

[77] The whole judicial background of the *jus talionis* makes it likely that the difficult *mē antistēnai tōi ponērōi* also refers to abstaining from judicial proceedings against an unjust legal adversary (if *ponērōi* is taken as masculine, as the following verses suggest, including vs. 45) or against unjust legal action (*ponērōi* taken as neuter). Vs. 40a, with the explicit reference to legal dispute (*tōi thelonti soi krithēnai* = the one who wishes to contend at law with you) supports the judicial sense of vs. 39a. Moreover, Mt 5:40b continues the picture of an OT legal situation (the cloak having to be returned at night according to Ex 22:25-26; Dt 24:12-13), while the parallel in Lk 6:29 envisions banditry (cf. Clavier, "Matthieu 5:39," 49 n. 39). The tenor of the whole context thus makes a judicial reference in *mē antistēnai tōi ponērōi* almost certain. We are reminded of Paul's rebuke in 1 Cor 6:7. Consequently we cannot accept Baumbach's attempt (*Verständnis,* 70) to see vs. 39a as a rejection of military resistance in the tradition of the Maccabees or the Zealots. The imagery is personal and judicial rather than corporate and military. Bornhäuser, *Bergpredigt,* 92-93, would restrict the reference to civil suits; for judicial usage of *anthistēmi,* he points to Dt 19:18 and Is 50:8 in the LXX (so, too, Daube, "Eye for Eye," 258-259, especially n. 2 on 259, who adds Is 59:12 and Jer 14:7; cf. also Eichholz, *Auslegung,* 92-94). Grundmann, *Das Evangelium nach Matthäus,* 169-170, thinks Mt has added a judicial context to the simple logia seen in Lk. For the opposite view (namely, that Lk has changed the original wording seen in Mt), cf. Schulz, *Q. Die Spruchquelle der Evangelisten,* 121-124; also Black, *Aramaic Approach,* 190.

But two objections seek to do away with the element of revocation here.

(1) It might be claimed that here Jesus is simply continuing and underlining the deepest intent of the Law. The basic intention of the *jus talionis* was to limit excessive private revenge. Jesus, it is claimed, simply draws the ultimate, radical conclusion inherent in this tendency to limit revenge. Actually, the point made in this objection is true of all the antitheses: Jesus is radicalizing and interiorizing the Torah (e.g., the protection of the woman in Dt 24:1 is extended to a total prohibition of divorce). But, true as all this is, it does not obscure the real distinction between a simple radicalization and interiorization on the one hand, and a radicalization which involves the abrogation of the letter of the Law on the other. We have the latter case in the fifth antithesis (talion), as in the third and fourth (divorce and oaths).

(2) A second objection points out that the *jus talionis* had already been softened and abrogated by tradition. For, by the time of Jesus, monetary compensation had generally taken the place of strict retribution in kind.[78] But we would note that M. Noth, in his commentary on Exodus,[79] holds that such "transferred" compensation was already

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[78] In this regard, Daube, "Eye for Eye," 258, draws attention to the fact that the phrase "life for life" is omitted before "eye for eye" in Mt 5:38, although it precedes "eye for eye" in Ex 21:23-24 and Dt 19:21. This is supposed to show how the idea of revenge had been softened by the time of Jesus ("life for life" might still be taken literally in criminal law but "eye for eye" was softened to adequate compensation). Whether this inference is valid is questionable. A number of other equivalencies (e.g., hand for hand, foot for foot) are also omitted in Mt 5:38. And, in Lev 24:20, the phrase "life for life" does not immediately precede "eye for eye." Where it does occur (Lev 24:18), it follows immediately upon a law demanding restitution for killing a beast. The death penalty is mentioned in 24:17+21, but not with the phrase "life for life" immediately following. Strack-Billerbeck, *Kommentar* I, 337, provide proof for the softening of talion; but they point out that, in the case of false witnesses, strict talion in kind is sometimes witnessed in the Christian era. According to Josephus (*Antiqu.* IV.viii, 35), whether restitution was to be in kind or in money was left to the decision of the injured individual. In their *Kommentar* I, 340, Strack-Billerbeck quote Rabbi Eliezer ben Hyrcanus (c. A.D. 90-130), who taught the literal observance of talion. For the text, see the tractate *Baba Kamma* 83b-84a in the Babylonian Talmud. From this text, Strack-Billerbeck conclude that we cannot exclude the possibility that strict talion in kind was still practiced in the days of Jesus. We might add that anyone reading *Baba Kamma* 83-84 is not likely to come away with the feeling that the question was completely settled even for the Amoraim. At any rate, the historical situation in the first century A.D. is not as clear and homogeneous as Daube would like to think. As for OT parallels that soften the desire for revenge (Prov 20:22; 24:29; 25:21-22), most of them are prudential admonitions of wisdom literature, and none claims to be a revocation of law. Also, it is not always clear whether the sapiential prohibitions are aimed against imitating a criminal act, taking private vengeance, or prosecuting a lawsuit by the usual channels.

[79] M. Noth, *Das zweite Buch Mose* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1968) 147. Thus, even if Daube, "Eye for Eye," 255-257, is correct in saying that "eye for eye" refers to monetary compensation, we are still faced with the question of revocation of Mosaic regulations. The fifth antithesis may indeed be seen to carry through to its conclusion the ultimate humanistic thrust of talion, but this "fulfilling" involves the revocation of the law of talion itself. And, as an aside, we might ask

the case in ancient Israel. Thus, Jesus would still be rescinding the letter of the Law as it had been understood in Israel from the beginning. More importantly, the main point of talion is not so much retribution *in kind* as *equal* retribution (be it in kind or in money). And it is *that* basic order of retribution, commanded and regulated by the Mosaic Law, which Jesus forbids to his disciples. When we reflect on the implications of the fourth antithesis, we realize that Jesus' prohibition is truly astounding. For *all* human laws, not just the *jus talionis*, not just the Mosaic Law, but all human legal systems, rest on the basic idea that punishment must correspond to crime, that an injury of another's rights demands a restoration of the balance of rights.[80] Ultimately, Jesus' prohibition of talion destroys all human law, based as it must be on the idea of strict retribution corresponding to the wrong. We might call the fourth "the great antithesis." It is antithetical to any human legal system.

We submit, then, that while the first, second, and sixth antitheses (murder, adultery, love of neighbor) simply radicalize the Law, the third, fourth, and fifth antitheses (divorce, oaths, talion) radicalize to the point of abrogation.[81] And this abrogation touches not just cultic or cer-

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whether the final redactor had studied the history of ancient Near Eastern law sufficiently to know that what strikes the reader at first glance as harsh retribution was originally a humane restriction of private or excessive vengeance. The contexts in which the *jus talionis* appears within the Torah do not have a very humane ring. — We might note in passing that Daube interprets the fifth antithesis too exclusively in terms of the private insult mentioned in 5:39b (if indeed the reference is to private insult and not public excommunication for heresy; cf. Schweizer, *Das Evangelium nach Matthäus*, 79). Mt 5:40 does not deal with private insult but judicial acts.

[80] Eichholz, *Auslegung*, 92, points out that the *jus talionis* was a common possession of all the legal systems of the ancient Mediterranean world and Near East, from the time of Hammurabi on. Schmahl, "Antithesen," 293, observes that the thesis of Mt 5:38 is the basis of any law whatsoever. Judicial decisions necessarily base themselves on the concepts of proportion, equivalency, and restitution. But it is precisely these concepts that Jesus contradicts in the fifth antithesis. Only thus can the endless, vicious circle of blow and counter blow be broken; cf. Rom 12:21.

[81] It might be objected that there is nothing unusual in this from a Jewish point of view. The rabbis, while professing great fidelity to every letter of the Torah, did in practice annul different provisions of the Torah; cf. Strack-Billerbeck, *Kommentar* I, 717-718. We would point out, however, that there is a real difference between rabbinic practice and the ideas of Mt in 5:17-48. For the rabbis, fidelity to every letter of the Law was indeed *the* overarching theory, principle, or programmatic statement. Then, by various casuistic deductions (e.g., by using various *middōt*), they could in practice "get around" the Law, while avoiding any programmatic abrogation in principle. A good example would be the Prosbul of Hillel. And one should note that Hillel's Prosbul was probably just a matter of private opinion and advice which Hillel gave to his disciples; in the time of Hillel himself it probably carried no official weight. In such cases as the calf slain in atonement for a murder committed by an unknown criminal and the bitter water test, the rabbis deduced that the laws no longer held because of changed circumstances. The laws presupposed ignorance or uncertainty concerning the guilty party. The rabbis appealed to the fact that murder and adultery had become common and public practice, without the elements of secrecy or doubt. So the laws no longer held. In the case of the

emonial laws, not just obscure or impracticable points of the Law, but ethical and social institutions of great importance. What had been said in compact form in 5:17-20 has been illustrated at length in the antitheses. This is why we have examined the antitheses in detail: to gain the necessary corroboration of our main thesis. Jesus stated in 5:17 that he had an eschatological mission with regard to Law and prophets. Despite what is to follow in the antitheses, Jesus warns his disciples not to imagine that his mission involves total destruction of Law and prophets. Rather, his mission is a positive one: to give both Law and prophets their prophetic, eschatological fulfillment, a "fulfilling" that "spills over" the top of the old vessel, a completion that transcends the letter (Mt 5:17). Mt is at pains to point out (apologetically to the Jews outside the church, pastorally to the disciples within the

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tithes and confession ordered by Dt 26, Johanan ben Zakkai supposedly ascertained through an investigatory commission that the tithes were no longer being paid as the confession presupposed. So the law was rescinded as a result of a *fait accompli.* Note that in all these cases it is a question of the rabbis' giving into and accommodating the laws to increasing wickedness. There is nothing in common here with the radicalism of Jesus and Mt! In Mt 5:17-20, Jesus proclaims his eschatological mission with regard to the Law and the prophets. It is a mission which gives both Law and prophets their prophetic fulfillment, a faithful fulfillment which nevertheless transcends the letter. Jesus is indeed faithful to the Mosaic Law during his public ministry. But when the new age breaks in at his death-resurrection (the culmination of the fulfillment of all prophecy), the letter will fall in favor of the prophetic, eschatological fulfillment of the Law which Jesus brings. The antitheses then exemplify this prophetic fulfillment of the Torah. The important thing to note in the antitheses which revoke the letter is that the revocation is just as programmatic, just as much a matter of explicit principle, as is the statement of fidelity to the Law. Here we have no labored rabbinic casuistry and dispute, no Byzantine application of *middōt* used to extort the desired sense from a recalcitrant text, no theoretical fidelity short-circuited by practical circumvention. Instead, we have in Mt 5 the Son of God, divine Wisdom, proclaiming with full consciousness of his eschatological authority: "It was said by God to the generation at Sinai ... but *I* say to you that this provision of the Torah is rescinded [in three of the six antitheses]." The Markan *Streitgespräch* on divorce at least portrayed Jesus engaging in rabbinic argumentation before he proclaimed his own "law" in Mk 10:9+11 — though the mode of argumentation is unique to Jesus and unrabbinical, as is pointed out by Schoeps, "Restitutio principii," 271-285. In this matter of argumentation, Mt does follow Mk in the *Streitgespräch* on divorce; the command of Jesus is formally opposed to the command/permission of Moses, not to the command of God. But when Mt formulates his own view of Jesus and the Law in the antitheses, there is no rabbinic argumentation, no appeal to a scriptural basis. Rather, in three cases, the scriptural basis (understood as God's word: *errethē!*) itself is revoked on no other grounds than the authority of the word of Jesus. This programmatic fidelity (5:17-20) balanced by programmatic revocation (three antitheses) is something unheard of in the rabbis. — Besides Bultmann, *Geschichte,* 144, the element of revocation is well perceived by Schmid, *Das Evangelium nach Matthäus,* 92-93 (though he does not see the correct relation of the antitheses to 5:18, which he has to take in a metaphorical sense). Also, Davies in his earlier work, "Matthew, 5, 17-18," especially pp. 430 and 439, saw revocation, and precisely in Nos. 3, 4, and 5. It is to be regretted that under the influence of Daube, Davies changed his opinion in his *The Setting,* 101, especially n. 1 and n. 2; Davies no longer sees annulment in the antitheses. Sand, *Gesetz,* 53, rightly criticizes Davies for his position in *The Setting.* The whole case against trying to avoid the element of revocation is summed up well by Strecker, *Weg,* 146-147.

church) that Jesus was not a destructive revolutionary. He professed fidelity to every part of the Mosaic Law during his public ministry, up until the apocalyptic terminus of his death-resurrection, when prophetic fulfillment reached its climax (5:18). Teachers (both Jewish ones during the time of Jesus, and Christian ones in the church) must therefore take great care in teaching and practicing the commandments (5:19). Jesus warns his disciples (and Mt warns the Christian in his church) that only this more abundant, prophetic-eschatological Christian fulfillment of the Law, only this Christian justice, will allow one to enter the Kingdom (5:20). What precisely constitutes this Christian justice is then explained by the antitheses. The disciple must radicalize and internalize the Law, looking always to the Law's ultimate, God-given intention, even when this means abrogating individual commands, permissions, and institutions of the Torah. For the Christian, prophecy has come to pass, and so the letter must fall in favor of the prophetic-eschatological fulfillment of God's will, realized in the life of the Christian.[82] In other words, the radicalized, internalized Christian justice which can abrogate the letter of the Torah (even as regards important socio-ethical institutions) is all whatsoever Jesus commanded (28:20a).[83] Teaching and observing this radicalized will of God is the task of the present-day church, and she has her risen Lord with her to sustain her in the task. The glorified Son of Man, now exercizing all power over the whole universe (28:18b), has not ascended *from* his church. In a proleptic parousia, he has come *to* his church (28:18a, *proselthōn*), to be with it and to sustain it all days in its task, until the old age passes away completely (28:20).

It is our contention that this exegesis of 5:17-48, unlike the various other theories examined throughout this thesis, does justice to all the philological data of the passage, to the Matthean composition of the various sub-sections, and to the overarching theology of Mt. Christology, paschal proclamation, salvation-history, and theology of Law are all woven together by Mt in this masterful exposition of his theology of Jesus and the Law.[84] The antitheses, which we have examined in this chapter, have given the necessary corroboration to our basic position. Chapter IV has confirmed Chapter III. The whole holds together.

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[82] Basically, then, it is to the Christian in his church that Mt (and the Matthean Jesus) is speaking in the antitheses. The second Matthean "horizon," that of Mt's own church, is dominant here. The glorified Lord speaks to his disciples, who already live in the prophetic-eschatological fulfillment he has brought.

[83] On the OT background of *panta hosa eneteilamēn*, cf. Lange, *Erscheinen*, 320 n. 35, 324. In Dt, Moses is usually the subject of the verb; elsewhere in the Pentateuch, God is usually the subject.

[84] Cf. Berger, *Gesetzesauslegung* I, 31 — although we cannot agree with his view of the origin and growth of the antitheses.

CHAPTER V

Summary and Conclusions

A. Introduction

In Matthean studies of the last few decades there has been growing agreement on such points as the separation of Mt's church from Judaism, a relatively late date for the gospel, the possibility of a Gentile author, a developed concept of salvation-history, the receding of an imminent parousia, stress on the fulfillment of prophecy and the importance of prophets in Mt, apocalyptic coloring, wisdom traditions, a "high Christology," and the tension between strict Jewish-Christian and more "liberal" traditions. These various aspects have not been floating in a scholarly vacuum. They have contributed to and been synthesized by the method known as redaction criticism. But, as in many forms of development, there has been a certain "time lag." Authors who appreciate the aspects of the gospel we have just listed may still tend to take over uncritically a traditional view of the place of the Law in Mt. Theories about the apostle Mt writing in Hebrew or Aramaic, or theories about a converted disciple of Johanan ben Zakkai writing a Jewish-Christian gospel as an answer to Jamnia, or even theories about the legalistic, casuistic Mt re-Judaizing the message of Jesus, are still seen or heard when the question of Mt's treatment of the Law is raised. One might see the present thesis as an attempt to bring the Law-question out of superannuated problematics and to integrate it into the contemporary insights and tendencies of Matthean research. These basic tendencies were outlined in Chapter I; the hermeneutical key for the integration was sketched in Chapter II; the integration itself was detailed in Chapter III (5:17-20); and support for our mode of integration was presented in Chapter IV. We now give a summary of the entire integration process.

B. Summary

In Chapter I we presented the presuppositions of our thesis. The two-source theory was accepted as a working hypothesis, and the methods of form and redaction criticism were adopted. The gospel was dated

c. A.D. 90, and Syria (possibly Antioch) was designated the most likely place of composition. While acknowledging the theoretical possibility that Mt's church had not yet been separated from the synagogue, we favored the view of Hare, who shows that the weight of probability lies on the side of separation. If there is one area of Matthean studies in which consensus does not reign, it is in the question of Jewish-Christian *versus* Gentile-Christian redactor. The majority opinion still favors the Jewish-Christian redactor, but the voices in favor of a Gentile-Christian redactor seem to be growing. We adduced a few passages in support of the latter view (Mt 21:2, 7; 22:23; 16:11-12), as well as some general tendencies of Mt's Greek usage. Our basic thesis is compatible with either an "enlightened" Hellenistic-Jewish Christian or a Gentile Christian steeped in the Jewish-Christian traditions of his church. But we think the latter more probable and more consistent. The gospel's *Sitz im Leben* is the whole range of the church's activity, *ad intra* and *ad extra.* This *Sitz* should not be narrowed down to one area, be it liturgy, catechetics, training for leaders, or apologetics. Despite the many suggestions for an esoteric form-critical classification, "gospel" still remains the best designation for Mt's work seen as a whole. Seen in the larger perspective of the trajectory of church history, the *Sitz* of the gospel is a church in transition, transition from a narrow Jewish-Christian past to a predominantly Gentile future. This shift in Christian existence required a reinterpretation of many primitive and venerable Jewish-Christian traditions. Mt, the scribe instructed in the Kingdom, who brings forth from his storehouse of teaching things new and old (13:52), who pours the new wine into new skins, so that both old and new can be preserved (9:17; cf. Mk 2:22), seeks to affirm his Jewish-Christian past while understanding it in a new context, namely the present and future of his church. The consequent tension between his tradition and his redactional reinterpretation is resolved by the hermeneutical key, the "higher viewpoint," of salvation-history. The difference-within-continuity that a schema of salvation-history affords provides Mt with the theological framework in which he can order his various traditions according to a divine economy. It was especially the Law-question which sorely needed such a reinterpretation through this higher synthesis. Therefore, before we treated the Law-question in 5:17-48, it was necessary to understand something of Mt's view of salvation-history, a view which must not be assimilated to that of Lk.

Chapter II presented our attempt to sketch briefly an understanding of salvation-history in Mt. Taking as our starting point the relation between Mt 10:5-6; 15:24; and 28:16-20 (all M), we noted a certain Matthean "ordering" of the mission of Jesus. During the public ministry, Jesus himself is sent only to Israel, as are his disciples. Mt thus takes over strict Jewish-Christian traditions, and yet manages to affirm them by setting

a time limit to them. After the death-resurrection, the same Jesus breaks through the restrictions of his earthly mission by commanding those same disciples to undertake a universal mission, with baptism instead of circumcision as the initiation rite, with the commands of Jesus instead of the Torah as the object of teaching. A first clue is thus given: is it possible that the restrictions of Mosaic Law, like the restrictions of geography and people, are broken down after the death-resurrection? Before we could answer that question we had to establish the legitimacy of speaking of the "death-resurrection" as one pivotal event in Mt. A study of 27:51-54 and 28:2-3, with all their apocalyptic motifs (earthquake, resurrection of the dead, angel of the Lord, etc.), indicated that, for Mt, Christ's death-resurrection does indeed constitute the turning of the ages, the breaking-in of the new aeon into the old (though the old is not immediately abolished). From this vantage point we can appreciate how Mt 28:16-20 presents a proleptic parousia. The exalted Son of Man does not ascend *from* his church; he rather comes *to* his church, with all power in heaven and on earth. The death-resurrection has ushered in a new era of realized eschatology. Inasmuch as the gospel is an extended form of paschal proclamation, we should approach Mt's teaching on Law from the starting point which is Mt's own "center of gravity," the death-resurrection seen as the turning of the ages.

Having seen briefly Mt's schema of salvation-history, we turned in Chapter III to a detailed analysis of 5:17-20, the most important programmatic statement on the Law in Mt. Do these verses reflect an attempt on Mt's part to insert the Law-quesion into the wider context of salvation-history (with Mt's stress on realized eschatology in apocalyptic dress and on fulfillment of prophecy)? We judged the answer to be affirmative.

Starting with 5:18 (Section A) because it offers a Lukan parallel, we quickly discovered that 5:18 is in many ways the pivotal verse of our whole section. Without Matthean redaction (5:18a+d), the traditional statement (5:18b+c) seems uncompromisingly stringent: "not one yod or stroke!" Yet Mt, in typical fashion, adds a time limit: "until all things come to pass." By an examination of every word in 5:18d (*heōs an panta genētai*), we showed the impossibility of Schweizer's interpretation: "in order that all the just commands of the Law [summarized in the love commandment] might be fully practiced by Jesus and the church." A careful philological analysis shows instead that the proper interpretation is: "until all things prophesied come to pass." Vs. 18d does express a temporal terminus to the preservation of every yod and stroke: the fulfillment of prophecy, a favorite theme of Mt (cf. the RZ and 24:34-35). The *heōs*-clause of 5:18b interprets 5:18d in apocalyptic terms as the passing away of the old creation — an event which Mt locates precisely at the death-resurrection. Mt's redaction of 5:18 fits in perfectly with his redaction of the Markan traditions of the death of Jesus and the empty tomb.

Already the suggestions we made in Chapter II seem confirmed. The death-resurrection of Jesus is the turning point between the old and the new aeons. Before this eschatological event, Jesus restricted himself to the land and people of Israel and correspondingly showed himself faithful to the Law. After the prophecies pointing to the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus had all been fulfilled, the exalted Son of Man comes in proleptic parousia to proclaim a universal mission. This universal mission will involve the passing away of a great deal more than one yod or stroke. The binding force of the Mosaic Law as an inviolable whole and *qua* Mosaic has passed with the passing of the old creation. What stands in its place are the words of Jesus.

Moving back to 5:17 (Section B), we gain a clearer idea of the precise function of the Law in salvation-history. With the orientation gained from 5:18, the words that immediately strike us in 5:17 as typically Matthean are *prophētas ... plērōsai.* We suggested that at least *prophētas,* and perhaps even *plērōsai,* come from Matthean redaction. The whole phrase *nomon ē tous prophētas ... plērōsai* seems to indicate that the Law is viewed as in some way prophetic. This is confirmed by Mt 11:13, where Mt turns the Jewish canon around and makes "all the prophets and the Law" the subject of the verb "prophesy." Just as the prophecies had as their main function to foreshadow and point to the fullness which is Jesus, just as they are exhausted and surpassed in their very fulfillment, just as Jesus, not the prophets, stands at the center of Christian faith, so too the Law pointed forward to the life and teaching of Jesus, the Law was fulfilled yet transcended in the fulfillment Jesus brought, and Jesus, not the Law, now stands at the center of Christian life. For Mt, then, the Law is interpreted in analogy with prophecy. This means, of course, that the prophetic stress on mercy and love acts as a criterion for interpreting the Torah. But, more than this, the Law, like prophecy, had a prophetic task within a given period of salvation-history. Jesus, the fulfiller of Law and prophets, has superseded the Law in the very act of fulfilling it. He can do this because he is not just a Jewish rabbi or a nationalistic Messiah. It is the transcendent Son of God, Son of Man, divine Wisdom, who speaks. With his unique eschatological authority, Jesus dares to replace important provisions of the Torah with his own words (as we see in Chapter IV). This is the profound meaning Mt gives to the idea of fulfilling Law and prophets. It is an idea grounded not only in salvation-history, but also, ultimately, in Mt's high Christology.

In many ways, 5:19 (Section C) is the most difficult verse to explain within the present Matthean context. It seems like an undigested morsel next to the carefully redacted 5:18. By arguing from converging probabilities, we suggested that 5:19 existed originally in Q and was linked to 5:18bc in a thesis-conclusion pattern. When Mt took over 5:18bc, he kept the basic thesis-conclusion pattern, though he disturbed its clarity

by inserting 5:18d. The concatenation of 5:18-19 in the tradition may show successive stages of Jewish-Christian attitudes on the Law. Vs. 5:18bc may reflect the severe view of stringent Jewish Christians, while 5:19 may be the corrective of more moderate Jewish Christians. This attempt at moderation has produced a curiosity piece (a low place in the Kingdom is a strange sanction), a kind of literary fossil now embedded in 5:19. Mt can, however, find a double use for the fossil within his two "horizons." (1) On the level of the sacred past of Jesus, the words belong to those statements in which Jesus professes and inculcates fidelity to the Law during his public ministry. (2) On the level of Mt's pastoral care for his church, the words inculcate fidelity to the teaching of Jesus on the part of Christian scribes. It is possible — though no more — that Mt added the unbalanced 5:19cd to the better formed *Satz heiligen Rechtes* in 5:19ab.

Vs. 5:20 (Section D) is probably a Matthean creation, formed to round off the great programmatic statement on Jesus and the Law (5:17-19) and to introduce the concrete conclusions which follow (the antitheses, 5:21-48). Again, this verse may be read on two levels. (1) On the level of Mt's church, vs. 20 is an exhortation to Christians to show whole-hearted commitment to "justice," the doing of God's will. (2) On the level of the public ministry, the verse expresses Jesus' fidelity to the Mosaic Law, a fidelity far superior to the hair-splitting casuistry of the scribes and the Pharisees. Seen in conjunction with the antitheses which it introduces, vs. 20 means that the surpassing justice Jesus teaches breaks through the narrow *hᵃlākōt* of the official teachers of Judaism and radicalizes the Law according to its innermost intention, even when this involves rescinding the letter.

When we look at Mt's redaction of the pericope 5:17-20 as a whole (Section E), we see that it was by no means eclectic or careless. Rather, Mt had a clear theological intent which he followed consistently. The tradition he received was probably made up of a more laconic form of 5:17 (perhaps without *ē tous prophētas* or *plerōsai*), 5:18bc, and 5:19ab. While we cannot be sure about how this unit appeared in the sources, it is not impossible that it already stood joined together in Q. Mt carefully redacted this unit according to his own interests — theological (regarding the nexus between salvation-history, Christ, and the Law), pastoral (addressing exhortations to church leaders and to all Christians), and polemical (against the Pharisees).

In Chapter IV we sought the corroboration of our thesis about 5:17-20 in the antitheses. The one basic question we addressed to each of the antitheses was: Does this antithesis revoke the letter of the Mosaic Law? If there are antitheses which annul provisions of the Law, then any interpretation of 5:18 (and 5:17-20 as a whole) which cannot make room for and explain adequately programmatic revocation as well as programmatic

fidelity is to be rejected, and our own explanation preferred. We first examined the antitheses in general and noted the importance of the six introductory formulas. Their basic meaning is: "God said to the ancients at Sinai ... but *I say* to you." The contrast here is between two acts of saying, not between saying and hearing. This bold contrast between what God said and what Jesus says is not to be attenuated.

In antitheses Nos. 1, 2, and 6 (murder, adultery, love of neighbor), we see that this contrast does not go so far as to revoke the letter of the Torah. But in antitheses Nos. 3, 4, and 5 (divorce, oaths, talion), we do have revocation. Avoiding revocation in the third antithesis by referring the exceptive clause to the Hillel-Shammai debate and by translating *porneia* as "adultery" is highly questionable on historical and philological grounds. Much more likely is the view of Baltensweiler, who interprets *porneia* in the light of the incestuous unions prohibited in Lev 18 (cf. Acts 15:29 and 1 Cor 5:1). The exceptive clause was inserted by Mt's church in order to rule out laxity on the part of proselytes involved in incestuous marriages. Thus, even with the exceptive clause, Mt 5:32 is a true case of revocation.

The fourth antithesis forbids oaths and vows, an honored Hebrew practice which was allowed and sometimes commanded by the Torah. The prohibition cannot be weakened by understanding "yes-yes, no-no" in vs. 37 as an oath. Mt's *mē omosai holōs* and his rejection of all oaths on the grounds that they infringe upon God's transcendence and majesty forbid this. The various oaths catalogued in vss. 34b-36 are only an illustrative, not a taxative list of prohibited formulas. And Mt 23:16-22 cannot be used to show that Mt acknowledged the legitimacy of oaths. These verses contain only an *ad hominem* attack on Pharisaic casuistry.

The fifth antithesis forbids the use of the *jus talionis;* indeed, it undermines the basis of all human legal systems by rejecting the idea of compensation in proportion to the offense. Neither an appeal to the ultimate thrust of the *jus talionis* nor its supposedly mitigated application in the time of Jesus can do away with the element of revocation.

We concluded, therefore, that three of the antitheses do revoke the letter of the Mosaic Law, and not simply in minor points or merely ceremonial rubrics, but in key social, religious, and ethical institutions. We thus confirmed our thesis by showing that the fulfillment of Law and prophets which Jesus brings involves programmatic rescinding or transcending just as much as it involves programmatic fidelity. Our interpretation of 5:18 (and 5:17-20 as a whole) makes room for such programmatic revocation; most other explanations do not. There is no need here to repeat verbatim the last two paragraphs of Chapter IV, which explain this point at length. Suffice it to say that we have tried to understand the central statement on Law in Mt 5:17-48 within Mt's

framework of salvation-history, with special attention given to the distinction between Jewish-Christian tradition and Gentile redaction. Mt states that the relation of Jesus to the Law — or better, the relation of the Law to Jesus — is a positive one. But as the eschatological Messiah, Son of God, and Son of Man, Jesus does not simply confirm and explain the Law. He fulfills it — with that prophetic fullness which sometimes goes beyond and antiquates the letter of the Law, just as it sometimes goes beyond and antiquates the original meaning of a prophecy. Jesus showed and inculcated fidelity to the Law during his public ministry; he announced that not one yod or stroke of the Law would fall until all events prophesied had come to pass. But in his death-resurrection, all things have come to pass; the *basileia* breaks into this aeon in a new, powerful way. It is in view of this new situation, with the Gentile mission it would involve, that the Lord of the church abrogates some elements of the Mosaic Law in the antitheses. The rule of life for the Christian is thus an "umbrella concept": "all things whatsoever I commanded you" — be that *secundum, praeter,* or *contra* the Mosaic Law.

C. Further Conclusions

We have already given those conclusions which constitute the thesis proper. As we come to the end of this study we might do well to list a few further conclusions which are involved in or which flow from our main thesis. Often these further conclusions are really further questions, which call for research into other areas.

(1) Mt may be described as fighting a battle on two fronts, but not in the way Hummel and Barth understand the situation. Mt is fighting Pharisaism (and so the idea that one is held to the stringent observance of the whole of the oral and written Law) on one side, and practical moral laxity which loves to cloak itself in great words and showy deeds on the other. There is no solid proof for an "antinomian" problem in Mt (if we understand antinomianism to involve a theoretical rejection of the Law or of moral obligation in principle). The problem within Mt's church seems to be more practical and pastoral than speculative and theoretical.

(2) Because of the attacks of the Pharisees and the practical problem of moral laxity, Mt is at pains to avoid the impression that he is attacking the concept of moral obligation or of doing the will of God in all earnestness simply because he holds that the Mosaic Law is no longer binding in its entirety and *qua* Mosaic.

(3) Mt achieves his synthesis of Christian morality by pointing out that Jesus often confirmed and deepened the Mosaic Law, while at other times he abrogated it or created new commands and structures (e.g., Trinitarian baptism in place of circumcision, the eucharist as

sacrificial memorial for the forgiveness of sins, the magisterium of Peter, etc.). The exalted Son of Man closes the gospel by ordering the promulgation and enforcement of all whatsoever he commanded. This whole corpus of Jesus' commands, be they Mosaic or non-Mosaic, is the Christian standard of moral action, the Christian justice which does the Father's will. It contains indeed many elements of the Mosaic Law. But its validity rests precisely on the authority of the exalted Son of Man, not on that of Moses. For the Christian disciple, Jesus is the norm of morality.

(4) It is in this sense, and only in this sense, that it would be legitimate to use in reference to Mt the ambiguous phrase, "new Law." But we must immediately add the caveat that Mt himself never used the term; it is simply a code word we might use to sum up the situation described above. The Christian "Law" is new not primarily because of its content (much *is* Mosaic) but because of the new grounding it receives in the eschatological event of Jesus Christ, in his words, actions, and person — an eschatological event which culminates in the breaking-in of the new aeon at his death-resurrection.

(5) The question of a "new Law" raises the further problem of the relation of Mt to Paul. A reconsideration of all the similarities and differences would demand another thesis. Here we would point out only that such comparisons in the past have often been too facile and superficial. Paul and Mt wrote in different generations, for different churches with different problems, and (if we are right about Mt's being a Gentile Christian), from very different backgrounds. One should therefore be careful about instituting comparisons. For instance, Mt's idea of the Law as prophetic (Mt 5:17; 11:13) can also be found in various forms in Paul (e.g., Rom 3:21; 4:1-25; 10:5-10; 1 Cor 10:1-13; Gal 4:21-31). The idea of love of (God and) neighbor as the summation of the Law can be found with different nuances in both writers (Mt 7:12; 22:34-40; Rom 13:8-10; Gal 5:14). But it would be a mistake to try to make their approaches to the problem of the Law identical. The problematic of each was shaped by his own time and situation. To try to harmonize the two would be as misleading as to try to play one off against the other.

(6) For methodological reasons, we have excluded from this thesis the question of the historical Jesus and of his stance vis-à-vis the Law. Yet much of the key material we examined in Chapter IV (prohibition of divorce, oaths, *jus talionis*) does seem to go back to Jesus in one form or another. Indeed, scholars like Schweizer and Jeremias hold that even the introductory formula of the antitheses comes from Jesus. If this is true, it tells us a great deal about the consciousness of the historical Jesus. In the face of important commands or permissions of the Torah, Jesus dared to say: "God said this to the ancients at Sinai... but *I say* the opposite to you." Seen in conjunction with the

abrogation of key provisions of the Torah (in addition to the ones already mentioned, we might add the abrogation of the food laws), this formula bespeaks an unheard-of claim to transcendent authority. Faced with certain venerable demands of the Law, Jesus claims that he knows perfectly, directly, and intuitively (i.e., without argumentation or deduction) the will of his heavenly Father, and that this divine will does not correspond to the letter of the Torah, which Jesus now abrogates. There is nothing here of the prophets' legitimation: "The word of the Lord came to me, saying...." Instead of engaging in endless fights over which titles Jesus really used of himself, a New Testament Christology might well begin with Jesus' stance vis-à-vis the Law. With regard to authority over the Law, Jesus stands where God stands.

(7) To conclude, we might suggest two ways in which our investigation touches moral questions today.

(a) We have said that Jesus, in his person and his word, is the norm of Christian morality. Whatever is taught by the church receives its ultimate authority from the command of Jesus. Peter is constituted "chief rabbi" in the church (Mt 16:17-19) precisely in order to give the disciples the correct interpretation of Jesus' *hᵃlākâ*. But while this power is total within the sphere of Jesus' teaching (Mt 16:19, *ho ean*), it is also in a sense restricted. The power to teach, given to the church, is the power to teach all whatsoever Jesus commanded — not *omnes res scibiles*, even in the area of ethics. One is reminded of the sensible distinction made by Paul in 1 Cor 7:25: "Concerning virgins, I have no command from the Lord, but I give an opinion...." (cf. vss. 10 and 12). Even the great Apostle of the Gentiles, conscious of the gift of the Spirit and writing under divine inspiration, realizes that certain areas of morality are not covered by commands of the Lord (at least as far as Paul knows them) and that in such areas even the great church leader must not issue commands but offer his opinion as persuasively as possible. This is a distinction which the church must always make in her teaching. Where the church has a command from the Lord, she must teach that command in all its radicality, without minimizing casuistry but as part of the good news of the eschaton breaking into our lives. But when the church comes upon some new question in an area where none of the Lord's commands are applicable, she should make Paul's distinction between what the Lord commanded and what church leaders advise. Such advice is to be revered as coming from Spirit-led leaders; yet it cannot be put on the same plane as a command from the Lord.

(b) In present-day controversies on divorce, moralists often ask why the church has taken the prohibition on divorce so stringently and seriously, while the prohibition of oaths, vows, and court battles is not enforced. Rather, the church has set up her own involved system of oaths, vows, and court processes. This argument is often presented

with the implication that the church should be as lax in enforcing the third antithesis as she is in enforcing the fourth and fifth antitheses. Should not a believing Christian argue the other way round? At least one must examine the possibility that Mt's gospel calls the church back to an eschatological existence in which she would (at least in her own inner life) enforce the fourth and fifth antitheses as strictly as she enforces the third. Granted, Mt's voice is only one among the many voices of the NT; and it is to the whole of the NT that the church must listen to discern God's will for her practical life. But, within the NT, one cannot dismiss Mt's radical voice as hopelessly legalistic or re-Judaizing. It is not Mt's gospel but the church which is always in danger of re-Judaizing. And it is the constant function of Mt's radicalism to call the church out of the life-style of the religions of this world, and to call her to a renewed living of that radical, eschatological existence which is the gift of the Fulfiller of the Law and the prophets.

Bibliography

The following list does not claim to be an exhaustive bibliography on Mt. It is simply a record of the books and articles actually consulted and found useful in the preparation of this thesis. The basic reference tools and critical texts are presupposed and are not listed. The abbreviations are those of the *Catholic Biblical Quarterly.* In particular, the abbreviation *TDNT* refers to the *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* I-IX (eds. G. Kittel and G. Friedrich; translator: G. Bromiley; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964 through 1974). Both the original text and the English translation of books and articles are cited only when both were consulted. Otherwise, only the version of a work actually used for this thesis is listed.

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